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The Kinship of Nature



Bessie Lorman

The Kinship of Nature

By

Bliss Carman

Author of "Pipes of Pan," "Low Tide on Grand Pré," "Sappho," etc.



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Contents

	PAGE
The Art of Life	1
On Being Strenuous	11
The Crime of Ugliness	23
Miracles and Metaphors	33
Haste and Waste	41
At the Coming of Spring	51
The Vernal Ides	61
The Seed of Success	71
Fact and Fancy	81
Easter Eve	91
The Cost of Beauty	101
Rhythm	109
April in Town	119
Careless Nature	125
The Wandering Word	131
The Friendship of Nature	139
Subconscious Art	145
Seaboard and Hillward	155
The Courtesy of Nature	163
The Luxury of Being Poor	173
"Solitary the Thrush"	183
Trees	191

Contents

	PAGE
The Ritual of Nature	201
Concerning Pride	211
Of Breeding	221
Of Serenity	231
Play	239
The Scarlet of the Year	247
Good Fortune	263
The Debauchery of Mood	271
Of Moderation	281
Atmosphere	289

To My Teacher and Friend George Robert Parkin

SINCE you are on the other side of the world, my dear Parkin, I must offer you my new book without your leave. This is not really so venturesome as it may seem. You never were one of those aloof and awesome Head Masters, who exercise a petty reign of terror over the effervescence of youth; and I cannot recall that we ever tried to steal a march on you, except on a few occasions in the history of the school or of your own life, when we wished to surprise you with some token of our bashful affection.

When this page comes under that glowing eye, which has since compelled so many audiences, in so many places larger than any schoolroom, on weightier matters than any

school discipline, let me ask you to recall those occasions long ago, and to think of this prefatory letter as an echo of that happy time. I even feel myself lapsing (or more properly stiffening) into the formal style of an address, to be read to you, with much stumbling and a quaking heart, before the assembled school. But I dare say you will find it none the worse on that account. As you sit now turning these leaves, whether in London or South Africa, you must pretend that you are still in the chair behind the high desk, where we all came for counsel and reproof, and that here is one of your boys come to tender you an offering long overdue, making acknowledgment of most grateful indebtedness never really to be repaid. For the service you did him is, next to the gift of life, the greatest that one man can render another.

Those were the days when we were all young together, whether at Greek or football, tramping for Mayflowers through the early spring woods, paddling on the river in intoxi-

cating Junes, or snowshoeing across bitter drifts in the perishing December wind, — always under the leadership of your indomitable ardour. In that golden age we first realized the kinship of Nature, whose help is for ever unfailing, and whose praise is never outsung. I must remind you, too, of those hours in the class-room, when the *Æneid* was often interrupted by the *Idyls of the King* or *The Blessed Damozel,* and William Morris or Arnold or Mr. Swinburne's latest lyric came to us between the lines of Horace.

I shall not fasten upon you the heavy responsibility of having turned more than one young scholar aside into the fascinating and headlong current of contemporary poetry, never to emerge again, nor of having helped to make anything so doubtful as a minor bard. It is certain, however, that you gave us whatever solace and inspiration there is in the classics and in modern letters, and set our feet in the devious aisles of the enchanted groves of the Muses. And I for one have to

thank you for a pleasure in life, almost the only one, that does not fail.

We learned from you, or we might have learned, to be zealous, to be fair, to be happy over our work, to love only what is beautiful and of good report, and to follow the truth at all hazards. If you find any good, then, in these pages, take much of the credit for it to yourself, I beg you. And whatever you come upon of ill, attribute to that original perversity for which our grandsires had to make allowance in their theology, and from which no master in the world can quite free even his most desirous pupil.

The essays which go to make up this volume were written at different times during the past six or seven years. In revising them for publication in their present form, a good deal that was purely ephemeral has been cut away; so that while they may not appear to contain very much that is of great significance, neither will they, I hope, be found altogether trivial.

Under the circumstances of their produc-

tion, they could scarcely follow any coherent and continuous trend of thought. Perhaps, indeed, it is not to be expected that a book of essays should do this. They can only have whatever unity of feeling and outlook attaches to the writer's philosophy, as it passes from day to day through the changing pageants of Nature or through the varied pomps and vanities of this delightful world. And yet, if I must be my own apologist, perhaps I may be excused for assuming that no work of the sort, however random and perishable, will be entirely futile, if it has been done in the first place with loving sincerity and conviction. It will have in the final analysis some way of looking at life, some tendency or preference, which in a more studied work would be more formal, but not therefore necessarily more true. It may attract only a handful of readers; it may not outlive the hour; but after all, that may be enough, if only it carry with it some hint of the experience which prompted it.

A book is only written for him who finds it;

and should carry to the finder some palpable or even intimate revelation of the man who made it. It is as if, by a tone of the voice or a turn of the head, a stranger should suddenly appeal to us as a comrade. And while it is true that the offices of friendship are not fully accomplished until we have eaten our bushel of salt together, it is also certain that the flavour of friendship may be recognized with the smallest grain. A book may be a cry in the night, like Carlyle's; or a message from "the god of the wood," like Emerson's; or a song of the open, like Whitman's; or the utterance of a scholar like Newman from the schools of ancient learning; or it may be no more than the smiling salutation of a child in the street. Let him receive it whom it may serve.

It is a long way from the little Canadian town on the St. John, in the early seventies, to the centres of the world in the beginning of a new era; but it is good to remember and to take courage. And while we who always must think of you with a touch of hero-

worship, look on with pride at your achievements in that larger workroom of responsibility to which you have so deservedly come, — while we kindle as of old at your unflinching and strenuous eagerness, — I hope that you will be able to read with satisfaction, and with some little pleasure, these latest tasks which I bring for your approval.

School will not keep for ever. By the feel of the sun it must be already past noon. Before very long the hour must strike for our dismissal from this pleasant and airy edifice, a summons less welcome than the four o'clock cathedral bell in that leafy Northern city in old days, and we shall all go scattering forth for the Great Re-creation. Before that time arrives, only let me know that, in your impartial and exacting judgment, I have not altogether failed, and I shall await the Finals with more confidence than most mortals dare enjoy.

B. C.

New York, June, 1903.

The Art of Life



The Art of Life



We have come to look upon art and life as separate things. We have come to think of art as a peculiar form of activity practised by a very few and enjoyed by a few more. There is a tacit belief in the bottom of the mind of most of us that art really has not very much to do with life. Even those who love art well are shaken in their faith at times by the universal skepticism around them. They are not unwilling to speak deprecatingly of art as a cult, to make concessions to the average standard of thought; they help to put art farther and farther away from life.

But what is the reason of this divorce of art from life? Is it only that we feel the too frequent lack of vitality in art? As every-

day people we cannot help seeing that a great deal of artistic energy is expended idly away from the main issues of life. The original artistic sin was the conception of art as something aloof and exceptional; and when once that pernicious poison had entered the human soul, naturally there were not a few adherents to the sect of the dreamers. Their number increased; the estrangement between life and art grew; the devotees of expression even became supercilious and fanatical in their sectarianism; until to-day the name artist is a synonym for the impractical bystander, the man of inaction, the contemplator of the actual, the workman who is a stranger among equals. It is nothing new to say that this vicious secession of one state of mind from the great republic of thought has worked sorry havoc to art. One sees that only too clearly every day in the really slight hold which art has on the public. In the days of the blessed innocence of art it never occurred to the artist that he was not a layman like the rest of his toiling fellows.

But if the evil to art was great, the evil to life was not less so. The idea that art is something that does not quite concern us in our every-day affairs, at last breeds the belief that in a natural state we should have no need of art. The truth is that in a natural state we should never know what art means, as distinct from life. Art is expression, we say. Very well, but nothing we can do or say can possibly be done or said without expression, without revealing the person behind the action and the word. You lift a finger or drop an inflection, and the stranger in the room has gathered a volume of characteristics of your personality. Yet expression is more than this; it is part of our work, too. Consider the truth of this statement, that nothing we do or say can be without expression; and then see how all trade and commerce and manufacture, — the whole conduct of civilization, — has its artistic aspect. And because of the original artistic sin, the divorce of art from life, we suffer in a life without joy. For work, like art, is noth-

ing but natural function, and the natural joy of the one is as great as the natural joy of the other; for they are only different aspects of the same energy, and not different kinds of energy.

No one ever heard of an artist complaining of the tedium of his work. Of course not; for him art and work are one; he tastes the blessed joy of a natural inclination having free play. He is expressing himself after his kind, as nature intended. On the other hand, how often does one hear a toiler (as the non-artistic worker is called) rejoicing in his work? His life is one long complaint. Why? Because false conditions and false ideals have so completely separated his work from all artistic possibility. It has been made impossible for him to find any expression for himself in his work. The hands must keep their aimless, weary energy, while the soul is stifled for an outlet.

"The heart in the work" is not a motto for the artist alone; it is for the labourer as well.

With that possibility before him, the meanest toiler may grow beautiful; without it, the veriest giant of energy will grow petty and warped and sad. The commonest work is ennobling when it provides any avenue of expression for the spirit, any exit for the heavy, struggling, ambitious human heart out of its prison house of silence into the sunshine of fellowship. Set me a task in which I can put something of my very self, and it is task no longer; it is a joy; it is art.

To make such a condition of work universal seems to me a sufficient aim for modern endeavour. How soon things would cease to be ugly and become beautiful, if only every stroke of work in the world had some expression in it! Of course, we cannot have that under existing conditions. Any improvement of society in that direction implies a cure more radical than has yet been attempted. It implies freedom for the common worker as well as freedom for the thinker and artist. Not until the term artisan has come to be as hon-

ourable as the term artist will we have real freedom. But I am afraid that with all our talk of freedom very few of us believe in it, after all. We seem to think it is dangerous. But freedom is not an acquisition of power; it is merely the disimprisonment of spirit. And not to believe in freedom is to believe in the ultimate evil of the spirit. For if the good is stronger than the bad, the less repression we have the better. Since it is impossible to discriminate between them, we can only unlock the doors and call forth every human energy, — give it opportunity, give it work in which there is some chance for expression, — believing that the better powers will triumph over the worse.

The art of life, then, is to make life and art one, so far as we can, for ourselves and for others, — to find, if possible, the occupation in which we can put something of self. So should gladness and content come back to earth. But now, with the body made a slave to machinery, and the spirit defrauded of any

scope for its pent-up force, we have nothing to hope for in the industrial world; and the breach between art and life will go on widening until labour is utterly brutalized and art utterly emasculated.

On Being Strenuous

On Being Strenuous

In Lafcadio Hearn's book, "In Ghostly Japan," there is a remarkable chapter on silkworms.

"In Nümi's neighbourhood, where there are plenty of mulberry-trees, many families keep silkworms. . . . It is curious to see hundreds of caterpillars feeding all together in one tray, and to hear the soft, papery noise which they make while gnawing their mulberry leaves. As they approach maturity the creatures need almost constant attention. At brief intervals some expert visits each tray to inspect progress, picks up the plumpest feeders, and decides by gently rolling them between his forefinger and thumb, which are ready to

spin. . . . A few only of the best are suffered to emerge from their silky sleep — the selected breeders. They have beautiful wings, but cannot use them. They have mouths, but do not eat. They only pair, lay eggs, and die. For thousands of years their race has been so well cared for that it can no longer take care of itself."

The moral to be deduced from this instance is obvious. Compare with the silkworms our mortal selves. These happy grubs are tended by a kindly boy, who supplies their every need; they have not a wish unsatisfied. By a sort of miracle, a supernatural power (as it would seem to them), they have been removed from the field of competition. For them the struggle for existence no longer exists. One imagines that if they were capable of prayer they could ask no more perfect gift than that which has been bestowed upon them — immunity from strife and security in the comforts of existence. What more do we ourselves ask? Our prayer is almost never that

we may persist, endure, and overcome, but rather that we may be removed by a kindly providence from the region of struggle to some benign sphere where all the delights of life may fall to our lot without an effort.

It is probably an idle and wicked dream. Witness the case of the silkworms. If you would form some notion of what the imagined heaven might do for us, consider the case of our small friends among the mulberry leaves. When we think of the lilies of the field, and promise ourselves a state like theirs according to the word, " Shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? " we are prone to forget that every moment of their life for untold ages has been filled with a strenuous purpose, quiet and unperceived, yet none the less strong on that account. Yes, we may have the motive and the vesture of our little sisters of the field, but we must have their tenacity and their indomitable endurance as well. To cease to strive is to begin to degenerate. As Mr. Hearn says:

"An early stage of that degeneration would be represented by total incapacity to help ourselves — then we should begin to lose the use of our higher sense organs — later on, the brain would shrink to a vanishing pin-point of matter; still later we should dwindle into mere amorphous sacs, mere blind stomachs. Such would be the physical consequence of that kind of divine love which we so lazily wish for. The longing for perpetual bliss and perpetual peace might well seem a malevolent inspiration from the lords of death and darkness."

Then follow these memorable sentences: "All life that feels and thinks has been, and can continue to be, only as the product of struggle and pain — only as the outcome of endless battle with the Powers of the Universe. And cosmic law is uncompromising. Whatever organ ceases to know pain — whatever faculty ceases to be used under the stimulus of pain — must also cease to exist. Let pain and its effort be suspended, and life must shrink

back, first into protoplastic shapelessness, thereafter into dust."

Then we turn to a modern poet, and read:

"Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine,
Man did not make and cannot mar.

"The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die,
Before I have begun to live."

How is one to reconcile Arnold's prayer for calm with the remorseless law of perpetual trial, perpetual endeavour? Is there indeed, a peace "man did not make and cannot mar?" Is the tremendous strain of modern life, its killing excitement, its relentless rush, its breathless haste, its eager and ruthless competition, a part of the inevitable development of man's existence? Or should we combat these things as temporary aberrations from the normal? Shall I serve my hour and gen-

eration best by combating the idea of strife and by insisting on peace and repose in my own surroundings or by entering heart and mind into the race and battle of the strong? Certainly I shall best serve my fellows by following my own conviction in the matter. That at least is sure; that at least is the cosmic law; to each individual his own ideal and the will to follow it. But how to know in the first place? How to tell the best ideal from the second best? Or is there, perhaps, some way of harmonizing both ideals in a single line of action?

In that great pageant of the seasons which passes by our door year after year, in the myriad changes of the wonderful spectacle of this greening and blanching orb, in all the processes of that apparition we call Nature, do I not see both strife and calm exemplified? That "calm soul of all things," which Arnold invokes, is really in constant strife. Every moment the apparent calm of nature covers a relentless battle for existence, tribe against

tribe, species against species; and the price of life in unceasing struggle, the whole earth groaning and travailing together. So that the appearance of calm which settles on the face of our mother earth, in the long, slow summer afternoon, is in reality but the veil and deception of the truth. Is it? Or may we think that the unaccounted powers of life at play through the world partake of a universal peace as well as of a universal strain?

How is it with ourselves? Is there any man who can wholly possess his heart in patience? Is there any who must always be striving? Is it not rather true that to the most strenuous of us there come fleeting moments when calm and self-possession seem good? And does there live the most confirmed quietist who has not at times been roused to action by love or patriotism or generous indignation?

It may very well happen that circumstances have placed you in the forefront of the fight, where all your splendid life long you shall have never a minute to call your own, where

you shall never once be able to rest or meditate or sun your spirit in a basking hour of leisure. Complain not. This is the fortune of the captains of humanity; be glad the good God has laid upon you a work as great as your powers. The stern struggle and victorious achievement can never be cramping to the soul. And the vast cisterns of repose may be opened to you in another incarnation; indeed they were possibly yours long since and from them you have derived this burning energy.

It may be, on the other hand, that inactive doubt and timorous incertitude beset me, and that I am becoming stale for lack of use. Never mind, the hour will one day strike, and the lethargic torpor of temperamental incapacity will be broken up, and I shall be remoulded into something more trenchant and available for the forwarding of beneficent designs.

Meanwhile for both of us, it may be, we shall find solace in a wise philosophic blending of the two ideals. It is somehow possible,

On Being Strenuous

I think, to be as strenuous and efficient as nature herself in action, and yet to have in mind always, as a standard of normal being, the inflexible serenity of the wheeling sun.

The Crime of Ugliness

The Crime of Ugliness



ONE hardly assents without question to the statement that ugliness is a crime. That the love of beauty is a pleasure we know, but why place it among the moral obligations? Is it not straining the use of language a little to speak of the morality or immorality of inanimate objects? Beauty is nothing but a condition of matter. And how can matter be either good or evil? Surely beauty is one of the things we may leave outside the pale of ethics!

Beauty, however, is really only another name for goodness, and the maintenance of beauty is as much a moral duty as the maintenance of goodness. And I come to believe this in the following way:

I perceive that we call things beautiful

which are most pleasing to our senses at their best, just as we call things good which are most satisfying to our emotional nature at its best, and still other things true which conform to the requirements of our mental nature. You may, if you wish, say that we have a special faculty for the apprehension of truth, which we call reason; that we have a special faculty for the perception of right and wrong, which we call conscience; and so you may say, too, that we have a special faculty for the appreciation of beauty, which we call taste, for want of a better name.

Again, since I cannot make any discrimination between my three natures, nor call one higher or nobler than the others, but am compelled to do equal reverence to body, mind, and soul, paying them equal heed and equal care, I conclude that taste and conscience and reason are of equal importance, equally to be obeyed. I know, moreover, that happiness only results from the exercise of our faculties, and the highest happiness only results from

the equal exercise of all our faculties to a normal degree in a normal way. When I exercise my reason, I am controlling and directing my curiosity in order to arrive at the truth; for in no other way can I attain pleasure or happiness of mind. When I exercise my conscience, I am controlling and directing my emotions, in order to attain and preserve the good, for I cannot have happiness of soul in any other way. And when I exercise my taste, I am controlling and directing the work of my hands and the acts of my body in such a way as to produce the most beautiful result. I know that unless I am allowed to work in this way, I can have no joy in my work.

Now furthermore I may conclude, surely, that joy in one's work, pleasure in one's emotions, and satisfaction in one's thoughts, go to make up the sum of happiness. And I am profoundly skeptical of the validity of any theory of conduct which can countenance the cultivation of any one of these forms of hap-

piness at the expense of the others. If it were not true that we can only reach happiness by a degree of cultivation of *all* our faculties, there would certainly be many more happy people in the world. All people who cultivate their mind assiduously and exclusively would be happy, and all those who cultivate their taste, with no regard to thought or sincerity of emotion, would be happy. But this is not the case. And more than that, we perceive that piety is by no means a sure bringer of happiness. The blameless life is often hidden under a mask of woebegone unloveliness. Our good friends are not happy because they have made the mistake of thinking goodness the only aspect of the universe, whereas it is only one of the three aspects. God does not exist as goodness alone; any more than man exists as soul alone; but He exists as beauty and truth also, just as man also exists as body and mind.

We are not constituted to find pleasure in falsehood or wrong, however much our ill-

balanced natures may seem to do so at times. There is always within us the capacity for approving what is noble and for believing what is true. No more are we constituted for deriving benefit from what is ugly, however we may tolerate it. For once show us something beautiful in its place, and instantly we are influenced by it. Now certainly the love of truth and the love of goodness are great virtues; yet they are no greater, I take it, than the love of beauty. And when we allow ourselves to act without regard for truth and goodness, our acts become injurious to our fellow beings, and are called crimes. For the same reason I call ugliness, or the creation of what is not beautiful, a crime. That it is not so considered generally is only too evident. When any one creates a beautiful object he is thought to have added to our luxuries. When a millionaire gives a library to a town, he is even thought to have conferred a benefit upon the community. This, however, is rather from the idea that townspeople are

getting something for nothing than from any sense of the beauty of their town being enhanced. Indeed, the library is too often but another crime against taste. But any general sense of the value of beauty or any general sense of the hurtfulness of ugliness, I fear, we shall look for in vain. Yet that is not true, either; for we all *feel* the harm of ugliness. Only we have not been taught to recognize it as an offence against the public welfare. The only instance of such recognition in recent days is the legislation against the disfigurement of the landscape with advertising signs. Certainly the perpetration of these hideous enormities all over the fair earth cannot be considered a crime in the ordinary sense of the term; they cause no material injury to any one. Yet they do offend every one of us, whether we are conscious of it or not; and that common, widespread injury, that hurt to every man's innate sense of beauty, is of the very nature and essence of crime. Public art,

or rather public work, is much more rightly the subject of censorship than private morals.

Of course, the cure for the disease does not lie in censorship at all; it lies in securing freedom for the workman. The appalling ugliness of our civilization in the mass, its monotony, its lack of cheerfulness, is only the reflection of our own lack of joy and elasticity. Our works are hideous, because we have no pleasure in them; and we have no pleasure in them, because we are slaves to commercialism.

But we must not scold. Only to rail against conditions that seem false and unlovely, is to be unlovely and false one's self. If we do not like things as they are, and do not believe in them, let us change them. Let us go about it with some degree of good nature and tact; for tact is only good taste in matters of conduct. If ever a burden of conviction hurries us away into angry speech, let us repent of our haste. We shall accomplish little for the good cause of beauty by the sacrifice of beauty in our own works and words.

Miracles and Metaphors

Miracles and Metaphors



NOT the spring only is the time of miracles in the natural world, but the year round, day and night. The moon comes up behind the spruce-trees like a great bubble of crimson glass, swelling and rolling slowly southward, until it is detached ever so imperceptibly from the edges of the dark hill-caldron where it was born, and floats away toward the bluish roof of stars. When the trees have done their gracious tasks of summer, gradually they suffer change from one glory to another, put off the green, put on the festal liveries of autumn, sanguine and yellow and bronze. How is the transformation accomplished? And all the teeming ephemeral creatures of marsh and twilight, what becomes of them,

when the time of croaking and buzzing and zizzing is over? Where do they go and how do they return?

These are child's questions. Science knows many things about them, and by and by will tell us more. But always, even to science, there is a margin of unknown which makes the known seem to wear the guise of the miraculous; while for the humbler eyes of the toiling world the lovely ordered rotations of nature must keep their actually miraculous seeming still.

It is a religious feeling, this special love of the natural world, and entirely modern. Perhaps it is our contribution to the evolution of spirit through spheres of religion, our step in the long process of emancipation, as little by little we grow toward that service which is perfect freedom. Lanier has a significant paragraph in one of his lately published papers, which bears on this consideration.

"Nothing strikes the thoughtful observer of modern literature more quickly or more

forcibly than the great yearning therein displayed for intimate companionship with nature. And this yearning, mark, justifies itself upon far other authority than that which one finds in, for example, the Greek nature-seeking. Granted the instinctive reverence for nature common to both parties: The Greek believed the stream to be inhabited by a nymph, and the stream was wonderful to him because of this nymph, but the modern man believes no such thing. One has appeared who continually cried love, love, love — love God, love neighbours, and these 'neighbours' have come to be not only men-neighbours, but tree-neighbours, river-neighbours, star-neighbours."

I am not quite sure that the Greek's personification of the stream was so different from our own; I fancy his imaginary divinity in it was much the same as ours; but we are glad to extend that universal gospel of love to our patient fellows in the sub-human dominions and to the half-animate and inani-

mate apparitions of beauty in a still lower realm.

Then there are the miracles of art, not so common as those of nature, more clouded by failures and mistakes, but just as marvellous, just as potent, and more significant as well. There comes a master, unheralded, from an obscure corner of the globe; the clay is living in his hands, or the colours take life at his touch, or he marshals the tones and syllables of sound, and at once a new creation springs into almost immortal existence for our delighted senses. The tune or the story spreads across two continents like the sun, and every mortal heart beats faster for keen zest, renewed and invigorated as at some miracle of nature. Our enjoyment of art is a religion, too, for it is the worship of the manifestations of spirit taking shape in forms of beauty, just as our enjoyment of nature is the worship of spirit manifested in the plasticity of sap and cell, — the lovely forms of the outer world.

These two religions are the worship of na-

ture and the worship of art, — the reverence of the form and the adoration of the spirit behind the form. Art, if you care to say so, is all made of metaphors, — is itself the universal metaphor of the soul. And who shall prove that nature is not a metaphor, too? The metaphor of miracles in nature is only supplemented by the miracle of metaphors in art. To each this striving, diligent, eager soul in us gives allegiance.

Haste and Waste

Haste and Waste



It is a common dictum of proverbial philosophy that "haste makes waste," that in hurry we rush upon confusion and miss our aim, making less progress than the tardy. But it is not so commonly recognized that haste really is waste, that it not only causes entanglement of affairs but wrecks the individuality as well. Haste is the fever of power, a malaria of the soul; and you will find that the great characters of the earth, in history or in our own day, are those who have been able to hold themselves undistracted and undismayed, — without haste. They have had that sanity or balance of mind which could perceive the futility of hurry and the ultimate triumph of serene endeavour. They never allowed them-

selves to be flustered, there was nothing in their blood of the "fluttered folk and wild." Each moment was sufficient for itself and its task. If there was more to do in an hour than human force could accomplish, then it must wait the next hour; one thing only was certain, no accumulation of duties and obligations must be allowed to astound the spirit for an instant. For the spirit, the central power within us, our self's very self, is in its essence and in its quality if not in reality eternal, and, when we do not hurry it, dwells in eternity amid the fleeting minutes and shows of time.

This is not the frothy grist of fanciful preciosity; it is common truth. Think for a moment. Stop now, as you are reading this recent volume, and notice how absolutely unhurried and unperturbed your inmost spirit may be. True, you have to hurry at times. You may have had to run for your train, or you may be late for dinner, you may have a stint of work to finish against time. The consciousness of this has not only made you hurry

your steps, it has made you hurry your soul. That is wrong. No matter how much of a hurry we may be in upon occasion, there is always the central consciousness which we must try to control and keep undisturbed. Now, forget your haste, just for a second or two, let go, stop pushing the train you are riding in, stop trying to do *all* your work at once; and perceive how deliberate, how regal and indolent your soul is, how sure of itself, how indifferent to the petty chances of punctuality or accomplished toil.

Here and to-day we cannot live as our fathers used. We cannot escape the pressure of modern life altogether, mitigate it as we may. But even supposing that you are under the necessity of strain in your occupation, that your hours are long and your work exacting, nothing can excuse haste or hastiness. It seems as if there were two selves, — the lower humble, obedient, toiling self, who occupies your body, sits in it at the table, rides in it on the train, walks in it through the street;

and the superior, commanding, thoughtful, masterly self, who does none of these things, but merely looks on and approves. Now, it may often be necessary for the inferior self to hurry, to drive on the willing body at top speed in accomplishment of some good object; but it can never be needful for the dominant self to be in haste. It is the business of the lower self to serve and bear about the higher; it is the business of the higher self to rule and direct the lower. And if I allow my inner imperial self to descend and toil in the servant's place, to become hurried and anxious and fearful, I am degraded; I deteriorate every minute. I leave the throne unoccupied, and yet the work of the scullery is no better done.

Many a man makes a wreck of health and happiness through worry. He cannot, as we say, possess his soul in patience. He cannot see the needs of the hour alone, he is looking at the needs of the coming year at the same time. No wonder he is abashed and disheart-

ened. A piece of work is to be done. To put his hand to it quietly and without worry or hurry, would mean that it could be finished in a day. If he would only hold his ruling self still, and order that useful drudge, his secondary self, to perform the labour, a day would amply suffice to see it finished. But, no, he does not do that. He is infected with the modern plague of haste. His soul is nervous; it is not content to sit by and see the work performed; it must rush down and tire itself out in tasks it was never meant to be occupied with. So our friend frets and fumes over his work for a week before he begins it; it keeps him awake at night; it disturbs his appetite; it makes him nervous and fanciful and incompetent; and when at last he does drag himself through the performance, the work is ill done.

Yes, it is necessary, in order to secure good work, that we should throw ourselves into it whole-heartedly, as the phrase goes. There must be no half-measures; we must be ab-

sorbed absolutely in the task before us. But this does not mean that the directing soul, the loftier self, must be engrossed. It means only that all those powers and faculties are to be employed which rightly can be employed in labour. It is not the province of the soul to labour. Its proper office is to exist, to be and enjoy, to sorrow if it must, to rejoice when it can, to direct, order, and govern.

It is absolutely necessary that we guard against the intrusion of haste within the precincts of the spirit. If we have no habit of easy work, no faculty for accomplishing things without effort, we must try to acquire it. For it is above all things desirable that we should live without fret and strain and haste in the inmost chambers of being. It does not make the least difference what the occupation may be. You enter a studio, perhaps, where the walls are dim and reposeful, where the atmosphere is quiet, and where you might suppose no haste nor disquiet ever entered. But what do you find? The occupant is a

modern painter. One glance condemns him; he is doomed; the blight of haste is upon him; every movement of his hand, every turn of his head, reveals the fever of excitement under which he is working. He cannot be himself for a minute, no, not for a second. He is bereft of control. He is consumed with haste. The fatal malady of modern life against which we must fight has taken hold on him. You perceive at once that he is not living at the centre of his being at all. His soul, instead of remaining in its secret chamber, alone, contemplative, kindly, serene, and glad, has rushed into his haste-driven fingers. His work is killing him, because he is not doing it properly, and the work itself is being ruined for want of proper balance and control.

On the other hand, look at this workman in a machine-shop. The belts are whirring and the cogs roaring all around him; the dingy house of iron and glass is a rattlebox of noise and dust and ceaseless clang. You would say that repose in such a place were impossi-

ble. And yet he goes about his work with a quiet pleasure, with a poise and deliberation, that show he has learned the secret of work and of repose. He is intent, zealous, and efficient; you would even say he is absorbed in his daily business. But you perceive that at the centre of his being there is calm. He has learned to possess his soul. He is without haste.

At the Coming of Spring



At the Coming of Spring



As the natural year draws round to a finish and the perished winter merges into spring, the old impulses for recreation are revived. Not a foot but treads the pavement a trifle more eagerly, with more divine discontent, as the hours of sunshine lengthen and soften at the approach of April. How loving, alluring, and caressing the air was the other day, — full of rumours from the south, news of the vast migrations already beginning and soon to encompass us with their unnumbered people. Already the first summer visitors have appeared in the hills and over the marshes, by ones and twos, the vanguard of the hosts of occupation; and even in the bad-lands of the city canyons we have intimations of these miracu-

lous changes. There come to us, deep in the heart, familiar but uncomprehended promptings to vagabondage, to fresh endeavour, to renewal of life and wider prospects; hope comes back with the south wind, and courage comes in on the tide. Plodding is all very well through streets of slush and under skies of slate; but when the roads are dry underfoot and day is blue again overhead, the methods of mere endurance and drudgery will no longer serve. The tramp instinct, which is no respecter of respectability, wakes up and has its due. On Sunday thousands of bicycles appear, like flies in the sudden warmth; on Monday there are carnations in the buttonholes of Wall Street; while every hansom on the Avenue is freighted with the destruction of another Troy. For this is early spring and the time of recreation is come.

If we think of the affairs of the universe as controlled by laws of rhythm, there seems to be a rhythm here, too, — the rhythm of creation and recreation, the contraction and

expansion of the heart of humanity. In obedience to this law we flock cityward in the fall, congregating and socializing ourselves for mutual dependence of work, — the plodding, uninspired necessary work of the world; but when the confining forces of winter are withdrawn, society disintegrates again, pouring itself out into the wider regions of country, out-door life, leisure, recreation. We have a yearning to be desocialized, that the individual may expand. Coöperation and dependence become irksome. The simple human heart has a call to care for its own greatest needs, and must have fresh air and a bit of solitude, time to think and room to breathe, a break in the fence and an open road over the hill. The desire of freedom is like a seed; once lodged in a crack of the walls of circumstance, it may disrupt the well-built order of conventional progress, but it will have light and space. Good ventilation is our only safeguard against disaster in this direction. You cannot kill the seed, you can only see to it that the

walls have plenty of wide, airy crevices where the wind and sun may penetrate freely.

There is another rhythmic flux and reflux in the relation of art to life; the creations of the one are the recreation of the other. It is the business of art to furnish us an escape from the actual, a spacious colony in the provinces of beauty, and free transportation thither. A new picture or a new volume of poems or a new story is not worth much if it does not give one a passage to some unexplored corner of that far country. You think, perhaps, this is a chimerical fancy, — the foolishness of a visionary conception of art, calculated to divorce art more and more from the actual. No, for it is the business, as it is the wish, of the actual to remould itself constantly nearer and nearer some ideal, some model, some normal standard; and this model it is the business of art to create. The earth has been infected with epidemics of insanity before now, — with the tulip craze and the South Sea bubble, for instance. It is the madness

of our time and country to fancy that benefits are the greater as they are the more tangible, and that happiness is inherent in material things. But joy and elation and betterment reside in appreciation, not in possession. The owner of a picture is the man who can make it his own, not the man in whose house it has been immured. Our sedulous laws regulate the transference of ponderable commodities and the appearance of things; but the traffic in realities, between mind and mind, is contraband and free. It is in this trade that the artist is engaged; if his merchandise is inappreciable and invaluable, his returns must be so, too. His visible compensation must be precarious, — a matter of circumstance; his true compensation will always be just and equitable. As no one knows how much his work cost him, no one can know how well he was repaid for it. But you may be sure that there was no discrepancy in that transaction.

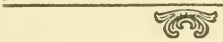
Our recreation should be not merely sport, but a true recreation of forces. The best

recreation is that reëngendering of the spirit which takes place through the avenues of art. To meet, to know, to assimilate perfectly some fresh creation of art, is to be recreated thoroughly, — to be put in tune anew, and set in harmony once more.

The best of wisdom in learning is to learn the various cures and remedies to medicine the mind. Poor volatile sensitive mind of man, so easily thrown out of gear, so easily readjusted! So when the time of the singing of birds is come, and the months of application are drawing to a close, and you begin to look about for recreation, you must not take it at haphazard. The recreation must be personal, suited at once to self and to season. The art most accessible to us all is folded between covers of cloth or paper, and may be carried with us to the mountains or the shore. If it is well selected, it will serve to second the athletic recreations of the body, and put us in fine accord with the influences of nature and thought. If it is ill selected, our holiday may

result in dyspeptic days of unprofitable idleness. For idleness is like everything else, it may be either good or bad. True idleness consists in doing nothing, with the grace and mastery of an accomplishment; this is an art. False idleness consists in doing nothing, but in doing it with the ill-nature and sloth of discontent; this is criminal. A beautiful idleness requires temper and genius; and though people of means may fancy they can compass it, you will nearly always find a discordant restlessness somewhere in their leisure. It is only the artist in life who can afford to be an idler, and you may take it as sober earnest that he is no debauchee of inactivity.

The Vernal Ides



The Vernal Ides

It is one of those happy phrases in which Emerson abounds, fresh and racy without being slipshod, homely but distinguished. What suggestions does it not carry of suns and warm breezes, of mounting sap and wild bird calls, and the purple evening hills!

There is a day in February which marks off the gray time of winter from the green time of spring as clearly as a line on a calendar. Even the brightest December sunshine gives no ray of hope; it is relentless, forbidding, unpromising; the sky foretells only an eternity of changeless cold; one could never look upon it and prophesy the miracle of summer. But by and by there comes a February morning, when the frost may not be less keen, nor the

sunshine more bright, yet there is a different expression on the face of the elements. Hope has been born somewhere in the far south, and there are premonitions of change, portents of liberation and joy. It is the first faint rumour of spring. And though the blizzard may sweep down again out of the north in the next hour, we know his victory will not be lasting; "the vernal ides" are on their way; the old Aprilian triumph is at hand. A little patience more, a few weeks or days, and we shall behold the first signals of their advance; the buds will be on the trees; a sudden wild song, fleeting but unmistakable, will break across the noon and be gone again almost before we can recognize it. And then at last we shall wake up in some golden morning, with a blessed song-sparrow singing his litany of joy in our enchanted ears, and know the vernal ides at last are here.

It is only in the north that we fully love the spring. After these iron months of unremitting struggle with the giant cold, the spirit is

glad when relief comes at length; and the season of returning vitality has a festal charm all its own. The day when the river breaks up is a holiday in the heart, whether we work or not. All winter long it has lain there before our doors, a broad, white road between the hills, swept with gusts of sparkling drift in the hard, bleak sunlight, gleaming bluish and mystical while the enormous moon stood over its solitary wastes, — dumb, prisoning, implacable. But at last deliverance arrives, and the bumping, crunching, jamming ice-floe is starting seaward with a thousand confused voices, while the old faithful blue appears once more glimmering and golden and glad. The first dip of the canoe's bow into that familiar flood, the first stroke of the paddle, the first long sunny day afloat among the willow stems in the overflowed meadow lands, and the first call of the golden-wing, lone and high, over wood and lake! The gladness of such a season comes only to those who have endured the gray storms, the low, cold suns

and the purple vaulted night, where everything is sealed with the slumber of the frost.

Little wonder that the vernal ides should fill so large a place in the northern imagination. Long inheritance of April happiness has given us that peculiar malady we call spring fever; has given us, too, a special spiritual sympathy or wonder in the reviving year. This truly religious sense has made itself widely felt in the racial expression, in the arts of poetry and painting.

"Oh, to be in England, now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England sees some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England — now!"

These "Home Thoughts from Abroad," of Browning, or Mr. Kipling's lyrical cry of the exile in India, with their refrain, "It is spring

in England now," embody the northern sentiment, a worship which may be pagan, but is certainly lovely and wholesome, for —

> "Spring still makes spring in the mind,
> When sixty years are told."

Of the mood which comes with the vernal ides, are born those aspirations and outpourings which have come to be a byword under the name of spring poetry. Perhaps the fact that the celebration is overdone to so ridiculous an excess is really no discredit, though one finds a new note seldom enough. Yet I wonder whether the vernal ides are truly a time favourable to artistic creation. If there are seasons of the mind, its April should be a month of starting and growth, of extended horizons, renewed vigour, fresh inspirations. But the month of fruitage is September or October, and the achievements of art are ripened to perfection in the Indian summer of the soul. It is not under the immediate stress of a great emotion that a great work is pro-

duced; most often it is the result of the long, silent cogitation, when the mind sits in autumnal luxury thinking to itself. In the vernal ides who would spend an hour on remembrance? When those days return we are too thankful for mere life, too sated with the rapturous zest of being, to dwell with fondling care over the swarming creations of fancy. And yet, there is our father Chaucer with that never stale opening of the prologue to his wondrous tales.

Of the inspirational value of these vernal ides there can be no doubt. They come back to us year by year with messages and reminders from the unfailing sources of life; they are heathen Druidic Easter days, symbols of immortal gladness and strength. When they dawn, we must bring out the flame-coloured robe of pleasure, and leave our old black garment of distrust, our overshoes of doubt, and our umbrella of skepticism in the closet. No pessimist must stir abroad when April comes. But we must all stand with bright

faces and clapping hands, when the long procession with banners of green moves up from the south. It is the feast of the vernal ides.

The Seed of Success



The Seed of Success



AFTER all is said and done, where does success reside? In material advantages, in solitary contentment, in lofty resignation? Is it in securing an aim after long years of endeavour, or is it in the daily realization of accomplished toil? Shall we measure it by the patent standard of the visible shows and circumstances of life, acknowledged by every one, or by the inward silent sanction of the individual conscience?

Perhaps before one answers one must recall the ultimate aims and ambitions of this so frail mortality. Ask yourself, ask your friend, ask the first man you pass. I fancy they will tell you in one word, happiness is the end of man's endeavour. Just to be happy,

to taste even for a moment the zest of radiant joy, is to partake of immortality. And to secure for himself as many serene hours and ecstatic moments as may be, this is the real aim of every man.

Why do I desire estates, houses, display, friends, a family, society, pomp, luxury, power, ease, or amusement? Solely because in these things there reside momentary pleasures; because in them there are opportunities of reviving hour by hour the fleeting instants of unadulterated gladness; because in appreciating or experiencing them, the unresting spirit finds the very breath of its life.

You ask me whether I call So-and-So successful; I must ask you whether he has been happy. It may be he was poor and looked down upon; but even so he was by no means unsuccessful, unless he was dejected, unless he longed for fame and wealth. It may be he was crowned with every tangible evidence of success, a man of note and influence, surrounded by everything he had striven for; still

I call him unsuccessful if there lurked at his heart some faint reek of discontent. No, to be successful is to be happy. Happiness is success. If there can but permeate the spirit some floating sense and savour of joy, as we live, then is our success assured. If every day we can feel, if only for a moment, the elation of being alive, the realization of being our best selves, of filling out our destined scope and trend, you may be sure we are succeeding.

And for one I must fancy that this gladness of life, this sure, radiant, happy sense of success comes only to the loving heart. It is very trite but very true to call love the seed of success.

If anything can fill a human heart with that sunny warmth of loving kindness, for that individual success is already assured. Look at the people in the street, the faces streaming past you, as you walk. It is sad to note how many are the sorry, dejected, sick, and dispirited. But even as you look on these transparent masks, do you not know intuitively

that the reason of their unhappy plight is their lack of success, and that the reason of their lack is their want of love? It is not a question of relative wealth. There are not more unhappy faces in one class than another. Think of the delicious thrill of encouragement one has now and again simply in encountering a glad, happy human face passing in the throng. Happiness, perhaps, comes by the grace of Heaven; but the wearing of a happy countenance, the preserving of a happy mien, is a duty, not a blessing. If I am so unloving and embittered that there is no suffusion of love in my heart which can show in my face, at least I am bound by every sacred obligation to my fellows to maintain a smiling countenance. Yes, even if it be insincere. For two reasons, for the sake of others, and for the sake of myself. There is nothing more potent than habit; and a sullen, hang-dog, injured, resentful expression is not only an unkindness to others but a menace to ourselves. While he who continually wears a smile

must at times be betrayed into a smiling gladness of spirit.

Let us remember the wisdom of the students of expression, in this regard, and be sure that if the inward habit of mind can control and form the outward habit of the body, this same outward habit of the features and frame impresses itself reflexly on the indwelling spirit. It is a realization of this truth that makes the Japanese insist so rigorously on the courteous seeming in all their daily deportment. Cheerfulness is with them a social duty; and if every man is not successful he is at least required to assume the aspect of success, the guise of a happy, contented spirit. How much might we not add to the total sum of our happiness as a people, if we, too, felt such an obligation. If you can find any justification for putting an unhappy murderer to death, there surely ought to be some punishment for that unsocial creature who constantly shows a gloomy face to the world. What right have you to sulk or be sad of visage? Your sorrow

is, after all, no more than the common inheritance of all our kind, and there is before us still the old duty of brave, cheerful heroism. In the name of all the saints, therefore, let us pluck up a heart from somewhere and turn a pleasant look upon the world! We shall thus all become conspirators for happiness, each man in collusion with his neighbour to increase the sum of joy in the earth, to lighten the burden of the days and to put far off the night-time of inevitable natural sorrow.

Then, too, think how the seed of success in all our artistic achievements is constantly revealing itself as the spirit of loving cheerfulness. There is nothing but the warmth of devotion which can irradiate and illumine the crafts of our hands. No skill, no technique, no device, no love of traditions, is competent for an instant to take the place of the artist's love and care. You will see it in every line the painter draws, in every note the musician sounds, or you will miss it sorely. And wherever you are brought into touch with any piece

of art that has the power to move you, you may be certain it has influence over the frail human heart because of the love in the heart of its creator. This is true, not only of the fine arts, but of all those less ambitious but no less honest arts we call industrial, to which so much untold toil has gone in the long history of man.

Fact and Fancy



Fact and Fancy



BETWEEN fancy and fact lies the dilemma we call life. On the one hand, things as they are; on the other, things as we would have them be. On the one side, the solid, durable, implacable circumstance; on the other, the plastic will, the deviable desire, the incertitude of mind. And yet the fact is not established beyond the influence of fancy. We are no more victims of circumstance than circumstance is the shadow of ourselves. We are moulded, we say, by the conditions and surroundings in which we live; but we too often forget that the environment is largely what we make it. We are like children living in fear of the fabulous giant, if we do not remember that fact is solidified fancy. What is the

form and substance of our daily life but the realization of countless years of aspiration and resolve?

There is nothing accomplished that is not just the impalpable breath of dream, a suggestion, a hint of spirit; on this the active self lays hold, and forges it into the more permanent shape. We make our habits, our customs, our possessions, as spiders spin their airy nets. The massive fabrication of civilized communities is reared from stuff more volatile than the clouds, only half of it is solid. And yet it is in awe of these floating apparitions that we pass so much time.

This is unwholesome. Fear is a malarial germ in the soul. If only the world could cast out fear and establish hope in its place, the morning of the millennium would be already far advanced. But if we would not fear, then we must love. If we would not shrink from the facts of life, we must love them. We are creatures so strangely compounded of dust and dream, that we can never wholly give our

allegiance to either one. We are neither animal nor angel, at present; and wherever our trend of aspiration may lead us in future, certainly this life is in some sense a compromise. Desirable as the angelic ideal appears, beautiful as it is for an ultimate goal, there is the fact of the physical to be taken count of, to be respected, to be reverenced, to be loved, equally with the spiritual. They miss the very core and gist of human life, it seems to me, who forget this miracle, the union of mind and matter. And certainly we shall accomplish little by an undivided devotion to the one side of life at the expense of the other. It sometimes appears that every human ill can be traced to the divergence between fancy and fact, between what we have done and what we would do. And this again is traceable to the faulty idea in the first instance.

It is evident, then, how loyal we need be to the promptings of fancy, to the inspiration to the glimmering of genius. For if we misinterpret or disregard this word of the spirit,

we are but setting out toward disaster. Our wrong initiative gradually takes more and more solid form in fact; the fact closes in moment by moment, and we are taken in the toils of our own weaving, which we too often call inevitable fate. But if a loyalty to the intimations of spirit is so large a part of wisdom, a loyalty to fact is needed, too, — a loyalty to those past ideas we have made permanent. It is good at times to let fancy be, to disregard the restless urgings of the inner life and dwell with the comfortable lower kingdoms, with the trees and the cattle.

That is one reason why we must take care to have our ideals right, so that when they have become crystallized into circumstance and conditions we shall be able to live with them. It is an unhappy soul that cannot live with its facts. If my outward material surroundings and my relations with my fellow beings are such that I cannot live with them quietly, normally, and frankly, as the weeks go by, but must depend on the intellectual and

spiritual life wholly, then I am on the road to sickness and sorrow. For fact and fancy cannot be long divorced; the one cannot live without the other; they are the body and soul of the universe. To the materialist must be said: "Cleave close to your fancy. Never forsake for a moment that generous and faithful guide. Be not overengrossed with the visible and solid beauty of being." To the overstrenuous idealist must be said: "Hold hard to fact. Live near the comforting, unrestless blessings of the actual. Never stray too far from the physical phase of existence, lest you wander and be lost for ever."

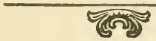
Men and women who take upon themselves the tasks of the intellectual life, who try ever so humbly to help forward the work of understanding the world, who wish to illumine and cheer the dark recesses of being, are peculiarly in danger of ignoring the fact. Eager and sedulous in the pursuit of this dream or that, as artists or preachers or teachers or reformers, they become wholly absorbed in the emo-

tional and mental life, neglecting the material. They are forerunners of better facts which they wish to see established and for which they too easily die. It is better to live for a purpose than to die for it, — unless to die is necessary. But our friends the enthusiasts who secure for us so much good, who are in the last analysis the authors of all the good deeds of man, should be content to hasten slowly, and, while they strive for perfection, to hold the sadly imperfect we have already gained. It will avail you nothing to stand face to face with the vision, if you cannot in some way make actual and apparent to men the beauty you have beheld. Let aspiration be as ethereal as you will, the spirit of beauty must be made manifest to be fully enjoyed.

Are you sick or sorry or dejected, or unfortunate, or overwrought? There may be one of two reasons for it; either you are living too far away from your ideal or too far away from your facts. If you are world-sick, retreat into the chamber of your own heart, be quiet

and obedient to your genius, and summon to your aid the great and kindly master's thought. A little solitude, a little contemplation, a little love, is the cure for your malady. But if you are soul-sick from too much stress of the eager indomitable spirit, then put all thought aside; vegetate, animalize, be ordinary, and thank God there are easy, unambitious things to do. Curl up close to some fact, if it is only a dog, or a wood fire, or the south side of a barn, and forget your immortal soul. Your mortal body is just exactly as important, and deserves just as much care and consideration. Be wise, be indolent, try to live in your body and not merely inhabit it, and do not fuss over the Great Tangle. "Who leans upon Allah, Allah belongs to him."

Easter Eve



Easter Eve



PERHAPS one must say that Christmas Day is the happiest festival of the Christian year, but certainly none has more fine subtle gladness than Easter. On Christmas morning we celebrate the great fact of being human; we commemorate the coming of One who was intensely a man, known, seen, touched, and beloved of our own very kind, a perfect comrade and son, the embodiment of all we know to be best in mortal beings. At Easter we celebrate the immortal fancy of an imperishable life. It is the season of rapture, of lyric belief in more than human possibility, the day on which the timorous soul is summoned to put trust in the very frailest probability, yet with the stoutest, most stubborn faith. Laying aside

doubt and the prosy mind, the soul now and again asserts her right to an hour of pure idealism where the solid and safe of actuality can have no part. She insists that conviction is enough, that proof is not necessary, that her beloved dream must come true because she has dreamed it so often and so hard. She will hear no cold discouragement from her scientific sister mind; she persists in being fondly wilful in her own sweet way. What do the plain deductions of all the doctors, of all the schools count with her? Is not her own intuition more reliable? Shall she forsake the warm, comfortable doctrine of a beautiful immortality for the barren desolation of the fleeting fact? It is moods of the spirit such as this, that one commemorates in the Easter celebrations.

Apart from the accepted religious significance of the day, there is still a whole cult of lovely and encouraging natural religion clinging about the Easter holiday which we ought to be very loath to discard. Rather, indeed,

let us foster all its gentle associations and customs. For if we are compelled to change our way of thinking on religious themes, we are not compelled to change our way of feeling about them. And the essence of religion is the emotion, not the thought, — the sure and certain conviction, not the logical conclusion. The foundations of life are still far beyond the reach of investigation; but among the realities of life as we perceive it is the sense of trust in continual goodness and abiding love. Why should you and I vex ourselves about the problem of immortality for the soul? You, with all your old-time religious certainties, are not more joyously convinced of it than I, though I can offer you not a single proof.

On the eve of such a festival in the midst of spring, what memories return with the April winds! The breath of approaching life sifts through the trees and grasses, the sound of running water stirs in the wild places, the birds make songs as they fly, there is everywhere the renewal of the ancient rapture of earth;

yet in the twilight one remembers all those glad experiences which are to be repeated no more, and the faces of unreturning companions.

So that if Easter is the gladdest of days, the eve of Easter is the saddest. It is now that I remember my vanished friend. In vain you speak to me of comfort or solace; in vain you offer me the consolations of some supreme faith. It is not lofty nobility of resignation that will aid me; I care not for all the sacraments and sanctions of your oldest religion; neither dogma nor theory can avail to help me here; for after all I ask so little. I only want to see my friend again, to run my arm about his shoulder, to see his slow, comfortable smile, to hear that gracious, melodious voice. It is just these common, human, earthly, unecstatic things I crave. And yet they are denied. Is it not hard? Time, you say, will assuage this desolation? No, for as time goes on I shall only need him the more. I shall be more and more impoverished by his absence, for hardly

a day goes by that I would not have profited by his friendship. In this crisis, in that dilemma, I should be so enriched by his encouragement, his fortitude, his calm, his sympathy, his insight. And wanting all this, I am poorer every minute that he is away.

Yet you tell me it is the fairest of April days, in the best of worlds. Yes, I know; I know all that; and I yield to no one in this foolish modern devotion to nature; but I tell you the universal human experience is right; 'tis friends and not places that make the world. You can not fool my heavy heart with the windy consolations of the pines, nor the solemn anthem of the sea. I want something more common, less stupendous, more human. Ah, but give me one more day with the man who was my friend!

No, it is not the law. The gods themselves cannot control the Fates. I shall not find his like again. But every April as the earth revives, and the returning forces of the grain and the sun and the vital air bring renewal of

joys to the creatures of this globe, I shall feel the renewed want of him, and I shall listen for him in vain in our accustomed haunts. There is no mitigation to that sorrow. But in the memory of his great, human, loving kindness there is the seed of an imperishable joy, the sufficient foundation for at least one man's faith. His influence remains; indeed, it grows and ripens about me; and as it has become invisible, it has also become more strong. Through the subtle avenues of affection I partake somewhat of his generous endowments. You shall find that I and all his friends are tempered by the quality of his personality. If he is no longer here as an apparent force in the world of affairs, those whom he loved are made the unconscious vessels of his imperishable power, the instruments of that potent spirit. Even while we grieve for him, his influence is transforming us to the likeness of something better than our former daily selves; and we begin to share in the imper-

sonal greatness, however imperfectly, with which he is invested.

Is not this true for you as well as for me? Have you not some such friend to recall at the great spring festival? And glad as you have been for the actual fact of sober existence, are you not equally glad for the unsubstantial fancy of immortality? Do you not assent to the fine and ancient faith which is embodied in the celebration of Easter?

I L. of C.

The Cost of Beauty



The Cost of Beauty

BEAUTY, you would say at first guess, is like genius; it is above cost and without price. It is, in the outward and manifest world of appearance, what genius is in the inward and spiritual world of imagination. Each in its own realm is the miraculous phenomenon of perfection, exhibited in the midst of a multitude of imperfections, arousing our wonder and enthusiasm to heights beyond the usual; so that around beauty or genius we are always ready to form the rudiments of a cult, to invest it with something of reverence, to begin to make it an object of worship. Indeed our attitude toward it has the elements of a religious feeling, and implies a tacit belief in its divine origin, as we express it.

Into our limited view, surrounded everywhere by restrictions and laws, beauty and genius come as supra-legal apparitions, compelling allegiance, stimulating joy, exciting reverence. They are, it seems to us, messengers and envoys extraordinary, accredited with intimations from the unknown, to which we gladly give ear. They embody and foreshadow those traits of winning loveliness toward which we aspire; they already are what we would be, — our aspirational and ennobled selves. One glimpse of beauty, one hint of genius, is sufficient illumination for a single day, — yes, perhaps for a lifetime, as we simple mortals are constituted. How old a story that is, wherein some loved form of beauty, early known and lost, has served as the enduring inspiration for a lifelong human experience! And how often we have heard of the trend of a character changed utterly by a single thought, a single gleam of genius!

Small wonder, then, if we have come near to making genius a demigod and beauty a

divinity. It is on the basis of this superhuman conception that our regard for them has been fostered.

In a more modern, scientific aspect, what are we to say to the appearance of beauty manifest to the senses, of genius revealed in thought? Merely that they are the natural outcome of natural law, in no way more miraculous than the imperfect and tentative commonplace world about us. But how, in that case, is my enthusiasm to be retained, my devotion and respect to be held? It is a trite enough question. There is no fear that revelations of new knowledge can make the further unknown seem paltry or familiar. Once let us accept reverence for law in place of a reverence for the supernatural, as it was called, — once let us acquire the habit of free belief in place of the habit of credulous timidity, and the borders of wisdom will seem infinite; the horizon of wonder will enlarge at each step of knowledge; and what we see will appear even more wonderful than we could faintly imag-

ine. We shall come to think of beauty as the complete realization of some typical thought under the restraint of law; and of genius as the partial manifestation of thought itself under a like restriction.

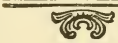
Beauty, then, and genius will seem no longer priceless; their value will be very definite. It will appear that they are produced under the most exact and exacting operations of the great economy of nature. We shall see that they have been priced at an enormous cost, just as we knew they could be sold for a song, — beauty the most perishable and fleeting of things, genius the most volatile and imponderable; this we knew; but we supposed they came as easily as they went. Ah, no! far from that.

You find some object of art, some beautiful thing the hands of man have fashioned, and ask what it cost. Here is a wooden tobacco-box made by a Japanese artist generations ago. You mark the loving care expended on it; you see it never could have been created by rule;

you notice how the humble love of the craftsman utilized every grain and knot of the wood, how he accommodated his talent to the unyielding exigencies of the material, yet in the end compelled it to serve his expressional need; it is nothing short of a masterpiece of genius. And what do you think it cost? Love, devotion, restraint, self-denial, endurance, fidelity, patience, faith, humility, diligence, serenity, scrupulous living, and an untarnished mind. Do you recall the years of ungrudging privation, of unquestioning toil, that made that inspiration of beauty possible? Or here is a modern binding, not remarkable perhaps, yet bearing evident traces of loving craftsmanship. Do you know how long the binder must sit at his bench before he can learn to master the cunning gold for tooling and edges? A friend of mine asked an old gilder the other day how long it would take to learn his art. "Well," he answered, "some can learn it in five years, and some never learn it." More patience, more devotion, more love and faith.

Yes, all art, the product of genius, comes of toil. And the previous question behind that, — the explanation of natural beauty and genius itself. The first spring flower, or the first bluebird in the orchard; are they the creations of a moment, the inspiration of nature on the instant? Think of the endless unrecorded history implied in that word evolution, — the ages of endurance, of failure, of submission, of tentative and countless variation, of changing type and perishing order, and this one frail individual emerging at last, to hang in the sun for so brief a heart-beat! Your Easter lilies cost more than a voyage from Bermuda. To bring them to perfection the earth must swing like a pendulum in space, and the sun and moon operate the machinery of the tides for more æons than we know.

Rhythm



Rhythm

Now that spring is returning, there comes again the old wonder at its loveliness, the old radiant sense of joy, the old touch of sadness, — the sorrow of the world. If we awake in the serene sunlight of some still April dawn, and find our life on the flowery earth very good, we also feel the question which underlies the murmurous twilight, — the disturbing question of the universe to which there is no reply.

In the morning, as you stroll from the house, the buds are breaking, the grass is springing green and new; there is no need for introspection; it is enough to be alive; self-consciousness is folly. Only the sick are self-conscious; and the first step on the road to

health is forgetfulness of self. You realize this as the beauty of April comes over you once more, and all your senses become absorbed in nature and forget to brood idly on themselves.

But in April there is more than the mere robust delight of the morning; there is the profound sorrow of the spring, the ancient and unutterable loneliness and sadness of human life, which has been going on for so many untold ages, renewing itself in confidence each spring and yet always doomed to impermanence and transiency. Even before we can have our heart's fill of the dandelions, they are gone; even before we are accustomed to the vanishing music of the birds, it has ceased for another year; and before we are attuned to beauty, that beauty is a thing of remembrance. Then, in the spring, who does not think of things that are never to return, — the handclasps of lovers, the conversations of our friends? Where is the princely comrade with whom we lunched at the country club last

April? Where is the loyal little companion who went Mayflowering with us last year? Last year? It is twenty years ago. It matters not, one year or twenty; the oblivion of the April rain has borne them all away, with their griefs and delirious joys, to the country over the hill where all the dead centuries have gone before them.

When the hosts of the rain come back they do not bring the friends they led captive in former years. They come for some of us, and we, like the others, shall not return. Children of the dust, travelling with the wind, "Ah," we say, "if only the April days would tarry always!" or "If only June would stay!" It seems such a mal-adjustment of time, when there are twelve long months in the year, only to have one June! All the gray winter through, and even all through the spring, we are waiting for the June days, the perfection of the year, and when they come there is not time enough to apprehend them. June goes by every year like an express train, while we

stand dazed at some little siding. In splendour and power it sweeps by; a gasp of the breath as we attempt to realize its flight, and then June is gone, and there is only another dreary year ahead. It is only in June that life reaches its best, and yet he is a very fortunate man who gets four or five years of June in his lifetime. There are not six years of June in the apportioned three score and ten. And that seems a very modest amount of the perfection of summer for any mortal to possess, does it not? I know I shall never be reconciled to this; but in the Elysian fields I am sure it is arranged differently.

Well, the meaning of it all? What excuse can Providence have to offer for so niggardly a distribution of happiness through the year? Why so much ice of winter and so little wine of spring? Why not all June and roses? That is a babbler's question, and the babbler's answer is "We do not know."

As the earth vibrates in her course from autumnal to vernal equinox our heart vibrates

between misgiving and elation. The long swing of the planets through their orbits is no more than a single beat of their endless vibration. The pendulum of the sun has a longer arm than the pendulum of the kitchen clock, yet the law of rhythm holds in both. The moon glowing and darkening in the purple night and the firefly gleaming and then extinguished in the meadow have different periods of rhythm, that is all. Not only music is rhythm, but all sound is rhythm. Colour, too, is rhythm, — the light rays of varying length in their vibrations. We are only made up of a mass of vibrations, all our senses being but so many variations of the power of perceiving and measuring rhythm.

Rhythm is primarily motion from one point to another. This is the beginning of life, the first evidence of anything more potent than inert matter. You see how faithfully the rudimentary idea of rhythm is maintained in nature. In her most subtle and complex performances she never resigns that first mode of

essential life, but does all things according to ordered rhythm and harmony. So that there could not be any June at one side of the Zodiac without December at the other. The year in its ebb and flow is the pulse-beat of the universe. If I am depressed to-day I know I shall be elated to-morrow. And, as I understand nature, it is wisdom to use her kindly forces for our own good. In unhappiness, therefore, or distress, or misfortune, it is idle to curse or repine; it is more sensible to abide, to wait until the earth has got round to the other side of her annual course and see how the event will appear from over there.

If to-day we are having an era of war and greed and barbarism, by and by we shall have an era of art and civilization again. Our Mother Nature does not glide ahead like an empty apparition, but walks step by step, like any lovely human, constantly moving in rhythmic progress.

We must not interfere with nature, to do

violence to her rhythm. We must not hold the pendulum back. But we shall best serve ourselves by serving the rhythmic tide of natural force, taking the current as it turns, and enduring in patient faith when it is adverse. And we must notice how all our own small lives imitate the great pattern of Nature, going rhythmically forward and not steadily, from gloom to gladness, despair to elation, success to failure, and back to success again. This knowledge should make us more ready and willing to profit by the favouring periods, to throw ourselves into the opportunity with unreluctant zest, and also to endure with fortitude the backward play of the rhythm of power within us. It should save us from ultimate hopelessness and the profoundness of despair.

Since it is April, then, let me think most of the gladness and surging life of April, and let me not think sad thoughts on Easter eve. Let me have the confidence of all the spring

things, and abandon my spirit without a single fear or a moment's misgiving to the great, sure, benign power which walks the world this April day.

April in Town



April in Town

As April draws to an end one finds the encompassment of streets and walls more and more irksome. As the sweet wind goes over the city roofs of a morning you look up into the pale warm spring sky and say, "Somewhere there is more of this; I remember a world whose horizon was round and vague and far away; I recall the real red colour of the earth — yes, red and green, not this sickly gray of granite and asphalt. Where is that country?" And there comes to you Whitman's great phrase, "Afoot and light-hearted, I take to the open road." The ancient immemorial joy of a thousand departed Aprils stirs from its lurking sleep in those placid veins of yours, and would lure you away

beyond the limits of the town. It is the old spring fret that moved myriads of your fellows long before, and will move others when we are gone. But for the ample moment, the large sufficient now, our glad elasticity of spirit, our rapturous exhilaration of life, are as keen as if they were to be eternal. Indeed, they are the eternal part of us, of which we partake in these rare instants of existence.

Then as the dim desire for change, the wilding wander-lust, shapes the spring-madness in our brain, the longing grows definite. The slumbering love of sea or mountain, marsh or dune or orchard land — places we have known, where we have really lived — puts off the lethargy of winter and kindles the pulses of the soul anew. How fruitless and wrong and ineffectual our tawdry city lives appear! Of what use is it to toil with so much diligence, to dress with such elaborate care? Surely we have been spending months in vain, when one soft spring morning can give our whole scheme of living the lie! Where is that

bright hour when we loitered by the idle wash of a June tide along the coast of Maine, or that other memorable breathing-spell when we saw the frail circle of the harvest moon among the tall hill-birches? What became of the hermit thrush we once heard sending his anthem down the twilight of the firs, while the air was burdened with apple bloom? And where are those changing sea-pictures, with the white-sailed moving ships, which we used to watch from deep verandas through the lilac-trees? Ah, that is the greatest memory of all, — the summer sea! All its wonder is calling to us to-day, as we tarry in grimy routine and dyspeptic indolence. It almost seems as if one would be justified in breaking all obligations for the sake of a day by the shore, when the buds are unfolding. But if so great a rebellion as that cannot be excused, there are always the docks and the ferries and the ocean liners unlading in the East River. You may get a breath of freedom there at the expense of an idle hour any afternoon.

Careless Nature

Careless Nature



AFTER all, Nature takes very little thought of herself. It is our human minds that are retrospective, brooding, careworn. One may question whether it were not better largely to forsake our habit of questioning and live more like the creatures. If wisdom lies inside the door of studious thought, madness is also sleeping there; and the mortal who knocks does so at his peril. We may become as gods to know good from evil; but are we sure that happiness inheres in that knowledge?

Once having turned his gaze inward, and discovered himself, man is in the perplexity of those adventurous souls who leave the old world and emigrate to the new. Having come to their destination, the novelty and

spirit and brightness of the fresh life fascinate and hold them for a time; then they tire of it, and long for the old home, where they are sure they will be happy once more. The same restless longing that sent them forth on the quest, sends them back again, seekers still. So "over the sea the thousand miles" they fare after a few years, with their hearts set on the old ways, the old customs, the old friendships, the old simple life. Do they find it? Not at all. The old country is not only different from the new; it is different from its old self; it has changed, they think, while they were away. And yet it has not changed; it is they themselves who have been changed by their experience. For it is not altogether true that *"coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt;"* and travel does unfold and modify the mind. Having beheld new worlds, we cannot be as we were before. So our emigrants find themselves as dissatisfied with the old home as they were with the new. Thenceforth they live for ever the victims of distraction,

touched with uneasiness if they remain in the old world, not wholly at rest if they reëmigrate to the new.

Is this our mortal predicament since we left the green world of nature and entered the gray world of thought? Do we not every day long to return, and tell ourselves tales of the sweet simplicity of that natural life? Do we not profess to despise the self-conscious and introspective existence? And what is our love of the trees and the birds, the sea and the hills and out-of-doors, but a hankering for the old creature life?

Go into the park or the woods any morning now, and listen until you hear a single rainbird soloing plaintively above the dimmer sounds. At that one touch of wild wood magic, how uncontemporaneous and primitive we become! How little matter our worldly state, our clothes and carriages, our bills and bank accounts! That is a strain which pierces to the heart and plays upon the soul. It finds us as we are, not as we seem.

And unless we are wholly corrupted and sodden with civilization, it wakens glimmerings of the golden age within us, making us

> "walk the earth in rapture;
> Making those who catch God's secret
> Just so much more prize their capture."

As that pealing cadence thrills on the damp air, the world is renewed for us; we pass backward a thousand years to the morning of earth, before care and sorrows were begotten, before ever we bethought ourselves of retrospect or inquiry.

The Wandering Word



The Wandering Word

SOMETIMES it seems as if words were the only realities, as if everything else were fleeting and perishable as dew. We say in household phrase that the word that is written remains, and we think of our heritage of literature. But the unwritten word has an indestructible life as well.

In the Old Book, where the story of the creation is told, how the heavens and the earth were made in the beginning, it is written "God said." No other way of promulgating the vast elemental *fiat* could occur to the imagination. By simple word of mouth the revolving firmament was created, so that beautiful poem has it; and the conception is a tribute to the power of the word. When you

come to revise that primitive notion, and substitute for it some slow gigantic idea of evolution, rational but ponderous and lumbering, much of the wonder at first escapes. The process seems so logical, the periods of time are so immeasurably enormous, that one hardly travels back to "in the beginning;" the mind is so sufficiently occupied with the revelations of scientific method, it does not note the old ever-present marvel. For the sphinx has only retreated behind another question; and our solution of the riddle has been found in terms of still another conundrum.

Follow the evolutionary idea, the new idea of the creation, to its limits, and there the ancient wonder resides as fresh and inscrutably smiling as it was in the Hebrew poem. The reason at last runs back to the power of the word. For, think of the infinite tribes of the earth and the sea, and the breeds of the air; if no voice said, "Let these creatures appear, each after its kind," they must have

said to each other, "Let us go forth and possess the earth;" or at least they must have said to themselves, each in his heart, "Go to, I will become." A world without words is an unthinkable world.

And, again, in the New Book you may read "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." This is a more illumined, modern, and symbolistic way of saying the same thing that the author of the first chapter of Genesis said. There was no time, it seems to imply, when expression and the power of communication did not exist; more than that, there never was a time when anything more potent than a word held sway over being. In the Scots usage, "The word is with you," shifts the obligation from speaker to hearer, and places the credit where it is due. And in the phrase, "The word was with God," I read the attribution of all moral force. Also, if "the word was God," and God is unchanging, the word is still Lord of the Earth. Thought, senti-

ment, desire, these are our rulers, and they have their only embodiment in expression. It is by the help of the wandering word that they hold sway and move in power.

Before the written speech was the sound of the voice, prevailing, urging, convincing, obtaining the individual's wish and swaying multitudes to a single will. Then with printing came the multiplying of the word, the increase of the powers of the unseen. All of the fine arts are only differing phases of the word; they are only so many modes of expression, signals of the spirit across gulfs of silence. And our Titan of the century, mechanical invention, what is the end of all its labour but to bring men face to face more rapidly, that they may speak what they know, or to carry their thought abroad with the swiftness of light?

So now, when the vernal sun is warming the earth, and April is spreading up the sloping world with resurrection, by what magic is the transformation wrought? In the dim nether

glooms of the deep sea all the fin people have received the summons; the unrest has taken hold of them, — the fever of migration; and the myriad hosts from the green Floridian water and azure Carib calms gather and move; surely and swiftly they come, through the soundless, trackless spaces under the broken whitish day, up to the cool fresh rivers and the pools of the North. How did they know the date? By instinct? But what is that? The communication came to them, inexplicably as it comes to us, — the unuttered word, the presage, the portent. And their brothers the birds, too; already they are here, hard on the heels of the retreating frost, every tribe with its cohorts full and overflowing; from tree to tree, from state to state, the long unnoted procession comes up through the night. How they started, how they guessed the hour of departure, we can only dimly surmise. Their movements are as mysterious as our own, their whim as undiscoverable. Yet to them, too, the message must have gone

abroad. To say that the word went forth among them is to use the simplest and most elemental imagery.

The word is that which has both meaning and melody, both sense and semblance; it is that which informs us; it is neither matter alone, nor spirit alone, but the dual manifestation of the two in one. It is the symbol of the universe that we perceive, and the universe that we are. The Word is the Lord of Creation, the unresting master of life, the great vagabond, our substantial brother and ghostly friend.

I knew a man who was a writer by trade, and one day in conversation I heard a friend say to him in the course of their talk, "Don't you really love a word better than anything else in the world?" But this monstrous notion he stoutly repudiated, almost with indignation, I thought. Years afterward, however, he reminded me of the incident, and said that he had never quite escaped from that suggestion, — that he often feared it was true.

The Friendship of Nature

The Friendship of Nature

Is not our love of Nature only the sentiment of abounding vitality and rugged self-reliance? In his prime a man is unacquainted with fear, his look is outward upon the bright changing face of the earth, so fresh, so beautiful, so untouched by time, so vigorous, so unafraid. He may have a genius for society and spend his useful life in one of a thousand glittering successful ways, with hardly a thought for nature; or he may have a genius for solitude and introspection, and walk apart from his fellows, " a lover of the forest ways." The trees and the hills may appeal to him, and the sea tell him wonderful stories with its old monotonous voice, so that he is content and even happy by himself with little human

companionship. To-day is enough for him; the birds are his musicians, and he has said in his heart, "I will commune with the Great Mother." And so long as he is young and well, with that temperament, his solitary habit may suffice, and in lonely silence he may find solace for the common griefs and disappointments of men.

But let him fall for an hour below the normal level of health, let the sudden sweeping out of sickness come upon him, and the pith of all his brave credulity will melt away. His adored monitor and mistress cannot break her adamantine silence for the sake of one poor mortal; he no longer finds in her countenance the sympathy he fancied was resident there; in truth it was no more than the shadow of his own exceeding great desire and superabundant vitality; and now that the need of help or sympathy or understanding is come, he must turn to his own kind.

There is in reality a power in Nature to rest and console us; but few are so strong as

to be able to rely on that lonely beneficence; and we must seek the gentler aid of our fellow beings. Indeed, only those who are humane at heart can rightly hear the obscure word of Nature; while those who have been reared not far from the wild school of the forest make the best citizens and friends.

Perhaps the greatest boon that we can receive from Nature is health. Our friendship with her should give us sanity first of all. The strain of life in these days in our cities is apt to become excessive in two directions: We are apt to become wholly engrossed in affairs and suffer from sheer physical exhaustion, or we may become too completely and dangerously detached from the current interests of existence. Either one may mean madness and death. But a daily contact with the elements, with elemental conditions of being — sunshine, and rain, and roads, and honest grass, and the swish of winds in the trees — is a sedative and tonic in one. To know the kindliness of Nature we must take constant care to

abide by her customs, not to hurry over duty nor to tarry too long, but to move with the appointed rhythm she has bestowed upon us, each man true to his own measure, and so in accord with his fellows and not at variance with the purpose of creation.

Subconscious Art



Subconscious Art

THERE is a general recognition of the fact, but no clear comprehension of the power, of subconsciousness expressing itself in various forms of art. We readily recognize in a painting, a poem, a piece of music, the presence of a force ("a something" we are likely to call it), which we do not readily define. We say perhaps that the picture has soul; it sways us, we know not why; it allures us, we cannot tell how. A too exact critic might perhaps ridicule our susceptibility to a vague charm we could not pretend to understand. His very philosophic and rational mind would insist on clarity, on definiteness. For him the painting must be logical, conclusive, limpid. But somehow, we say, we do not care whether

it means anything or not, so long as it moves us pleasurably. We can enjoy Browning's "Child Roland" or William Morris's "Blue Closet" without asking what they mean. And we are right, too. Art does not always have to mean something obvious. Some poetry is addressed to the mind and some is not. The best poetry, of course, addresses the mind and emotions as well. But just as a deal of good poetry has been written which appeals chiefly to the rational self in us (nearly all of Pope and Dryden, for example), so a good deal has been written which appeals to our irrational instinctive self. And indeed, in all poetry, even the most rational, there are certain qualities which pass the threshold of the outer mind and pass in to sway the mysterious subconscious person who inhabits us.

The most obvious of the qualities in poetry, is the metre or rhythm. The measure of verse has an influence on us beyond our reckoning, potent and ever present, though unrecognized. So that the simplest, most unexalted statement

of truth, commonplace though it be, if once thrown into regular verse, comes to us with an added force. Perhaps I should say with a new force. It may not make a statement any plainer to our mind, to versify it; it may not make it any stronger mentally; but it gives it a power and influence of a sort it did not possess before. This added power is one of the things that distinguish poetry from prose, — art from science. Now the principle of recurrence is the underlying principle of rhythm and metre and rhyme and alliteration. And I wonder whether this constant reiteration, this regular pulsing recurrence in poetry, does not act as a mesmeric or hypnotic agent.

It is quite true that good art is the expression, not only of the rational waking objective self, the self which is clever and intentional and inductive, but of the deeper unreasoning self, as well. It is also true that good art impresses the deeper as well as the shallower self. The outer objective self may be extremely brilliant, may master technique and

become skilled in every lore of the craft, may, indeed, become as masterful in execution as the masters themselves, and yet if it have not the aid of a great strong inner subjective, unconscious self, it can do nothing of permanent human interest. You know how accurate a draughtsman may be, and how learned in anatomy, and yet how dismal and uninspired his paintings after all. You know what brilliant execution a pianist may have, and yet how cold his recitals may leave you. This is the achievement of intentional mind unassisted by the subconscious spirit. And necessary as it is, it is not alone sufficient.

To attain the best results in art we must have both the personalities of the artist working at once. All the skill which training and study can give must be at his command, to serve as the alphabet or medium of his art, and at the same time the submerged, unsleeping self must be set free for active creation. Scientific formulæ are an admirable means of communication between mind and mind, but

art is a means of communication for the whole being, — mind, body and spirit.

This being so, it is necessary, in doing any creative work, to cultivate the power of submerging our useful, objective self far enough to give free play to the greater subjective self, the self beyond the threshold. This is exactly what occurs in hypnosis, and I dare say the beat and rhythm of poetry serves just such a purpose.

> " Dearest, three months ago,
> When the mesmerizer Snow
> With his hand's first sweep
> Put the earth to sleep — "

In these lines of Browning's there resides, I am certain, a power like that that he describes. It resides in all poetry. It is the magic we feel but cannot fathom, the charm we must follow, discredit it as we may.

Apply this test to any good piece of poetry of which you are fond. Take Tennyson's " Crossing the Bar," for instance. That poem appeals to our mind with a definite idea, a

definite image, which you may easily transpose into prose. The poem might be translated without loss of the thought. But what of the magic charm of the lines:

"For though the flood may bear me beyond the boundary of time,
I hope to see my Pilot's face when I shall have crossed the bar."

I have not altered the thought, but I have destroyed the stanza. The spell has vanished with the metre. The reason that Tennyson's verse is more pleasing than our mangled version of it is this — simply that it speaks to us more completely. It not only appeals to our intelligence, but it appeals to our sense and soul as well. The soul has memories of regions and lives of which we have never heard. The soul dwells with us as tacitly as a silent companion who should share our habitation for years, yet never reveal the secrets of his earlier life. And good poetry and good art have much to say to this work-a-day understanding

of ours; yet they have more to say to the soul within us, which comprehends everything. The difficulty is in obtaining access to the soul and securing egress for it. The creative artist must subordinate cunning to intuition, and he must embody his beautiful creations in some form that will be able to elude the too vigilant reason of his fellows and gain instant access to their spirit.

If I were a poet I should not merely wish to set down my conclusions about life and the universe; I could accomplish that better by being a trained philosopher. I should not merely want to convey to you new and important facts of nature; I could do that better by being a scientist. I should not want to convince your mind only, for I could do that better by logic and rhetoric. But I should wish to do all these things and to win your sympathy as well. I should not only wish to make you believe what I say, but to believe it passionately, — with your whole heart. In order to do this I should have to secure free com-

munication of spirit, as well as of mind. I should not only have to satisfy reason, I should have to lull and charm it. I should have to hypnotize that good warder of your house before he would allow me to enter. Just as I had to mesmerize myself with the cadence of my lines before I could fully make them express my whole nature, so you in your turn as reader would have to feel their undefinable magic before you could appreciate and enjoy my poems to the utmost capacity of your nature. I could only secure this result through the senses, through the monotonous music of my verse.

This may seem to you nothing more than the wisdom of the snake-charmer. Well, that is all it is. But that is enough.

Seaboard and Hillward

Seaboard and Hillward

If it ever happens to you to pass quickly from the sea to the mountains, and if you care to note the subtler psychical phenomena, I am sure you must have experienced more than the gross change of air; you must have been conscious of a translation from the emotional realm to the realm of pure thought, from the region of feeling to the region of mentality.

That there are three and only three zones of life, the physical, the mental, and the spiritual, is quite certain; and that the last two of these correspond to the zones of ocean and hill, I think very probable; but whether the other, the physical zone, corresponds to the zone of plain and level, I am not so sure.

Think, however, how evidently true it is that the sea is the great nourisher of imagination, the stimulator of romance, and how all her border people have been the originators and creative artists of the world. There is something in the sea's air which breeds emotion; it is strong and vitalizing; those who breathe it have bulk and stamina; while the dwellers on mountains must content themselves with the thin dry stimulant which blows between their pine slopes. Your hillsman is proverbially lanky, more a creature of moods than of passions; and in the elemental sorrow which seems to invest him, you may detect the overweight of thought, the lack of emotion. For generations aloof from the business of the world below him, he has maintained the solitary and egocentric life; he has found little outlet for his selfhood either in action or passion; the free intercourse with his kind has been lacking; and that portion of his nature which flourishes most easily alone, the mental part of him, has held its own un-

diminished and undiverted existence, commenting with the lofty solitude about it and brooding through vast stretches of leisurely silence on its own being. He is become the shy, sensitive, individualized creature to whom sociability is a panic, and achievement a miracle. He undertakes almost nothing and accomplishes still less. A hunter and trapper all his days, he is willing to do with a bare subsistence, if only he be not forced to mingle with men, to merge his identity with that of his fellow, to pass from his own wilding sphere, into the hurly-burly of competition and association. The advance of civilization leaves him out; he watches with bright eyes from his roadside solitude, while the pageant of progress goes by with dust and blare. If he ever found a voice, he would be the prince of critics. That cold, dry nature would sit unmoved to judge the tumultuous events about him. He would see the outcome and significance of that strenuous process of development, which he is so ill-fitted to share. Others,

with their full, ruddy life, would originate a thousand works of beauty and utility, while he still dreamed; but at the last their hasty activities and imperfect aims would come under his judicial view for blame or commendation, — the affairs of action and the affairs of sentiment brought to the ultimate test of implacable reason.

Not so with your dweller by the bountiful sea. With the world's blue highway leading past his door, with the traffic of the nations of the earth going forward continually under his blue eyes, this man is no solitary. His power of detachment is small. He is a spectator, indeed, of the tragedies of storm and the endless drama of the tideways of the deep, but he seldom can refrain from taking part in that fascinating and enormous play. From a child he is accustomed to ships, and his nursery tales are stories of adventure. The sunlit and limitless highroads call him eternally to vaster chances and unexplored lands. The strange new tokens of foreign people

come home in his father's chests; his daily walk is among innumerable reminders of civilizations and customs not his own. To live the inward, secluded life solely is not possible to this child of seafarers; his emotions are enlisted strongly in the doings of his kind at home and over sea; the life he knows is not a mere tissue of mental phenomena, a panorama running before his mind; it has a grip on his vitals; his emotional experience is full; and from that fulness of rich being there spring the unnumbered creations of the active spirit. It were impossible for so abundant an enrichment of the character not to find vent in the flowering of expression, not to embody itself in art.

The Greeks, the Venetians, the French, the English, — these masters of the sea have been the masters of artistic creation as well. And their wonderful contributions to the treasure-house of the world are not to be matched by any mountain folk whatever. So much one

may deduce from history; and I am inclined to believe that a careful consideration of personal experience would confirm an idea which may seem a trifle fanciful at first.

The Courtesy of Nature



The Courtesy of Nature

PERHAPS one of the things that charm us most, as we come back each year to the green world out of the stress of our city life, is the great courtesy of nature, if one may call it so. For her laws, though inexorable, and even ruthless at times, are none the less gentle. I doubt if there is cruelty in nature. We must wait until man appears and evil is born into the world, before we find anything of malice or greed in creation.

It is truly a state of war, in which all the wild things live, whether they dress in leaf or skin, fur, feather, bark, or scale. The unceasing struggle for self-preservation and the perpetuation of kind is veiled but real. And

great nature, which looks to the casual eye so calm, so unstirring, so saturated with content and repose and the essence of peace, is actually in hourly ferment of strife. To our house-bred sentiment, it seems a pathetic thing that every wild creature should die a violent death. But, after all, what better fate could befall it than to render its life up for the preservation of other life more complex, more active, more intelligent than its own? It is only man who kills wantonly. The beasts that live by killing kill only as hunger bids.

I think we feel the influence of such natural benignity in our pleasures of the open air. One may say, without being misanthropic, that the greatest joy in nature is the absence of man. For in our retreat to the woods we escape what is basest in ourselves; our fellow mortals are not thrust upon us so closely; we have room and time to choose our companions; and we forget for awhile the cruelty of fear and greed.

I know the theme is deeper than I can go.

The great dilemma of humanity is not to be solved offhand. And there remains, after all, our hand-to-hand strife for a living, in which the weak go to the wall. I do think, however, that we might learn a lesson from that great nature which seems so impersonal, and sometimes so reckless of life. We might learn the courtesy of tolerance.

Here is our city life, our modern *modus vivendi,* mitigate it as we please, a veiled yet ruthless encounter man to man, — a strife to the death. You may cushion your pews and deaden your walls, and replenish your table from the ends of the earth; you may lull yourself with sermons and salve your conscience by founding charlatan colleges and establishing impertinent charities; but the fact remains that men and women are being worked to death in order that you and I may have our luxuries.

"Well, what then? This is no more than happens in a state of nature," you say. Yes, it is more. For in nature one is content with

enough; in civilization one is never content. One of the chief characteristics that we seem to have brought with us from an earlier stage of existence is the baleful heritage of fear. Indeed we seem to have cherished and developed it past all need. It is fear that is at the root of all cruelty and greed, the two evils that most disgrace the life of man. Under primitive conditions, the dangers to life are greater, and the chances of security less; so that it behooves the savage to go warily. Fear is his vigilant warden. But as he makes progress toward the amenities of a more civilized existence, surely, one might suppose, fear would be the first trait he would lose. For the first great boon of his advancement must be immunity from danger. The first good that comes to him from combining in a recognized structure of society, however crude, must be security of life. He can have less and less need of fear as a delicate instant monitor for self-preservation. Unfortunately, this is not so. Instead of laying aside fear,

we have developed new desires, absurd and unthought-of requirements, that can only be satisfied, as they increase, by ever-increasing acquisitions of property and stores of wealth wrung from the earth. Nor is this enough; we are still not satisfied with what we can earn by labour; we must plunder from our weaker fellows, outwitting them in relentless guile; until in the midst of plenty the struggle for a bare existence is as fierce as it ever was among the tribes of our predecessors.

Very likely this vigorous process of social and individual evolution is productive of some good qualities; we are not likely to become lazy under it; none the less it seems to common sense terribly wasteful, as wasteful as the processes of nature. And if we are not to devise means to better nature, if we are not to use our intelligence for purposes more benign than those of the pre-human and sub-human creation, I can form no notion of the proper use of mind at all. You may tell me that the inexorable law of nature has pro-

vided for progress by the simple means of preserving the fittest to survive, and that in human society we merely follow the same methods. But I say that the laws of nature can offer the soul no criterion for conduct. I only exist to temper the occurrences of nature, to deflect them to my own needs, and to alter my own human nature continually for the better. I do not know what the soul is, but I know that it exists; and I know that its admonitions form a more beautiful sanction for conduct than the primitive code of evolution taken alone. But I do not believe that in our finer moments we shall find any fault with nature, though we shall find a taint in ourselves. I believe that we must in a large measure reverse the law of selection when we reach human society, but that at the same time we must remain nearer to nature in many ways than we are accustomed to do.

I do not see any greed in nature. I do not find any creature fighting for more than it actually needs at the moment. I do not see

any cruelty in nature, any wanton destruction, except among those primitive voters, our arboreal ancestors, the apes. But that is the taint of human ingenuity beginning to appear. I find in the world of green unflinching responsibility, abiding perdurable patience, and a courtesy that is too large, too sure, for the cruelty and greed of man.

The Luxury of Being Poor



The Luxury of Being Poor



At first thought you would say that the luxury of being poor, like the luxury of going barefoot, is only a luxury when it is not a necessity. But that statement is too epigrammatic for the sober truth. And truth is a goddess whose beauty best appears in diaphanous simplicity, without the oriental broideries of the too curious and too civilized mind. It is nearer the truth to say that as there is always an actual luxury in going barefoot, so there always is an actual luxury in being poor. If we do not always relish being poor, it is because we do not appreciate our blessings.

I am sorry for any one who cannot afford to be poor. Certainly to enjoy the luxury to the fullest extent one must be a gentleman or

a genius. But even without either of these advantages there is cause for thanksgiving in a modest amount of poverty. If you are poor, think of the endless burden of impediments of all sorts you escape from day to day, — houses, servants, tailors, teas, — a thousand cares and annoyances which press upon the rich and crush them back into the fat clay from which they came. There are rich people who are good, and there are rich people who are happy, but they are so at how great a cost! It is the old story of the savage over again. "Why don't you work?" "What for?" "So that you may be rich." "Why should I wish to be rich?" "So that you need do nothing." "But I do nothing now."

If you are rich you cannot be free. You have obligations you cannot shirk. But the greatest freedom of the poor is the freedom of spirit. If I am poor, I am not obliged to be always on parade, always living at a tension, always presenting an appearance. My outward circumstance is so insignificant that

I can forget it altogether and occupy my mind with the higher life. That is why it is good for a philosopher to be poor, — he has nothing to divert him from his noblest self. He may have the luxury of a free and untrammelled life. Voluntary poverty, such as that of the ecclesiastical orders, is a great positive virtue and a means of happiness. The mere act of renunciation in itself is no virtue. If you forego the pleasure of a new gown, and still keep hankering after it, that is no virtue, and does you little good. But if you abstain from buying it, saying to yourself, "Thank Heaven, I am free from one more encumbrance," you are already on the road to the Celestial City.

In order to have the goods of this world you must be strenuous, unsleeping, given to hard work. You must will and energize day in and day out. You must impose your way on others, and bend them to your purpose. You must strive and never rest. (Unless, of course, you are dishonest, and make your

money instead of earning it.) And for most people who are cast into the world with responsibility already upon them, such a life of endeavour is necessary. Others may be depending upon them, — the aged, the helpless, the unfortunate. They cannot shun the demands of humanity. They dare not indulge their own love of freedom. They cannot afford to be poor.

But if no one worked, we should have few of the decencies of life, our climate being what it is. Yes, I know that. I am not championing any fundamental philosophy. I am only insisting that we do not appreciate the luxury of freedom there is in poverty.

Cease to worry. Do not try to reason yourself into submission. Just dismiss your will entirely. Let it go out and play. Forget it. Then you may truly begin to live the greater life. Your own inner truer personality will have time and space to grow. You will breathe more freely and feel yourself a part of larger life. If poverty only makes us

strive the harder (not work, but strive) then it is a curse and not a blessing. But that depends on our own mind. To be able to enjoy this beautiful earth and our strange, rich, wonderful life, it is necessary to be free, to keep a spirit untrammelled by outward things and untarnished by error. To be soured by poverty or to be hardened by it is a mistake, an error of thought. Instead of enjoying our life, we are cramping ourselves. It is just as if we were set at a feast and sulkily refused to enjoy a few dishes because we could not reach everything on the table and make ourselves sick, like foolish children that we are.

Children do not mind poverty. It is not until they grow and cultivate their wilful individuality, that unhappiness and discontent overtake them. It is in their disregard of circumstance that we still may imitate them. They enjoy being barefoot and having nothing, until some mistaken grown-up makes them ashamed of it.

O artist, know that unless you can afford to be poor, you can never reach the full height of your power. You can never abandon strife, and insistence, and your own small worldly will. You can never be merged into the greater sweep of being whence inspiration flows.

Do you tell me that competition and struggle are necessary to make you produce your best? If that is the mainspring of your art, is your art all it might be? Are you not merely an artisan? If you were an artist, you would sit down in supreme contentment and rags, painting for the joy of it alone. If you could afford never to sell a picture your work would be ten times as good as it is, and it would grow better every year. The brooding soul ripens; the anxious mind withers and blights. It is not good for you to live richly in cities, because it is hard to deny yourself. You must first be poor and lonely and dejected; then you must think of the luxury of your freedom; so you will enter into posses-

sion of yourself; and you will be glad and free and creative and strong. There is no other gladness; there is no other freedom; there is no other greatness.

"Solitary the Thrush"



"Solitary the Thrush"

FROM where I happen to be sitting this afternoon there is nothing in the world but trees and birds. One measure of a man is his capacity for enduring solitude. I should be sorry to predict anything of a character from this knowledge alone; though there are familiar quotations on the subject. Certainly a little solitude now and again is good for most of us. It lets our busy, every-day, toiling, anxious self have a respite; and it gives our deeper, more serene self a chance to be heard. In solitary moments the stress of life is lightened or removed altogether, and we possess our souls (after a little practice) in enduring calm. Indeed, I fancy the expert in solitude brings home from his radiant contemplation

a fund of joyful patience to serve him in stormy hours. The wildest confusion of circumstance, the direst calamity, are powerless to undo him quite. Even under sorrow and irreparable grief he retains something of the great primal tolerance and unshaken solidity of nature.

For it is when we are most alone and withdrawn into our profounder selves that we are most completely in accord with the spirit of the universe, by whatever name it may be called. So that he who takes time to be alone occasionally is in reality preparing himself for meeting his fellows with greater sympathy and understanding. When we allow ourselves to be engrossed unceasingly in the smaller outward, trivial details of existence, and in superficial human intercourse, we lose our power of approaching our friends through the profounder channels of sympathy and appreciation. We become so thoroughly habituated to living on the surface that we seem to have no core of being left in us. This is

the real cause of the vapidity of society. Human intercourse, very likely, is the crowning end and aim of nature. But that implies human nature at its best, and we cannot too constantly be giving ourselves away without replenishing our individuality from that deeper intercourse which solitude affords.

But the great beautiful wildernesses of the earth are not the only regions where solitude may be sought. The world of art and the world of religion will serve equally well for our retirement.

For the past hour a brown thrush has been fluting in the thicket here, inducing the most thoughtless to meditation. Why is it that his song seems so entrancing to us? Is it not because on hearing it we are arrested midway in our occupation, and invited to partake of the silence while we expectantly await the next burst of the golden notes? It is the same hypnotic power that charms us in music; it stills our superficial, unnecessary self and allows our wiser, deeper self a moment or an

hour of freedom. Music is the most primitive and widely beloved of the arts; and it is one of the most powerful for this reason.

"I can always leave off talking, when I hear a master play."

Again, when a great drama is on the boards, there is all the direct appeal of its beautiful story and setting, the enlisting of our attention, the ennobling and intensifying of our sentiment; but at the same time there is the no less potent, though unnoted, spell of silence it is casting over us. We grow still to listen, and as we are absorbed in the spectacle, spirit finds its opportunity for unstifled growth. This may even be the great function of sleep; we do not know. Certainly we can rest perfectly well without sleep. Perhaps sleep comes from the soul's imperative demand for solitude, its need for intercourse with some spiritual profundity from which it springs.

In all our more obvious existence, our physical and mental existence, too much solitude

is a dangerous menace. It is only in community of life that sanity and health are maintained. For, superior and noble as the spiritual part of man is, it is too simple, too unworldly, to be entrusted with the control of affairs here and now, perhaps. So that while solitude is supremely important, it is not exclusively so. But that is a caution few of us need. For the most part, we are too absorbed with the loaves and fishes to be at all curious about the miracle.

Let me, then, learn to cultivate a taste for solitude. And for this, one need not be morose nor anti-social; for as solitude is not a physical need, so it may be had even in company. But repose of mind, if it is not quite solitary, is at least a tendency toward solitude. It is only in reticence that speech gathers force; it is only from rest that activity can arise. So it is only by being sometimes alone that we can ever be fit for friendship, companionship, or love.

So the thrush may chant for you from his

green sanctuary for half a day and send you back strangely elated and encouraged for new endeavour. These vague suggestions which I have set down as he sang may be quite valueless, and you, when you hear him, may have entirely different thoughts. It does not matter at all. We shall both have profited as we could by the engrossing music of the forest. And these crude ephemeral words will no more be lost than are his liquid notes in the deep ravine. They have served to embody for me my own hour of tranquillity. You, when you come to the woods, will find your own suitable words more appropriate and fresh than these. For, though this afternoon and its sylvan melody have perished in the shadows of the mountains, you, when you arrive, shall find others as fair and significant awaiting you.

Trees

Trees

FLOWERS are so small, so easily cultivated, so personal, so brilliant, that they have gained almost more than their share of human attention. While their elder sisters, the trees, keep their unobtrusive estate, and minister untiringly to our comfort with little praise or recognition. Yet, how necessary they are! I do not mean how useful, I mean spiritually needful.

Apart from their humble office as givers of shade and preservers of streams, they minister more than we guess to our hourly pleasure. Yet we are so thoughtless of them that we take their benefits without a word of gratitude for the most part. If you have seen a wooded hillside in winter you will remember how

lonely and bleak it looked. Only the bare skeletons of the trees spread over the mountain, and all the great primitive strength and ruggedness and sorry age of the earth exposed to sight, — the ribs of the world. These are the same hills, perhaps, that you knew in summer, so green and so luxuriant, bare now and stern, showing all their scars, bitter evidences of their strenuous, enduring history. The calm, unimpassioned whiteness of the snow has folded them in its chilly oblivion. It is impossible to believe that spring can repeat her ancient miracle; surely, here is the veriest desolation, the mere geology of life, inorganic dust, the inert mass of the firmament given over to the stealthy depredation of elemental time; no hope nor assurance anywhere.

And yet, in contradiction of all the probabilities of sense, that desolation will grow vivid and lovely as the sun comes north. All those gaunt spectres that now seem so ghostly will put on their gala attire, the April orange and May-time green. That soft, purplish mist

of the far spring woods means in reality the reds and yellows of the maple blossoms, and the paler yellows and silver of the willow catkins. It is the first flush of reviving life that comes before the green of leaf. And carefully as you may watch, the green banners will seem to be flung abroad suddenly at last. If you single out one tree for your care, and observe it every day, you may think to trace the gradual assumption of its full robes for June. You will be disappointed. There will come a day of rain or a night of warmth, and when you next see your friend you will stand astonished at the change. You have been surprised again by nature. The ancient sorceress had no mind to be spied upon; and must guard well the secret of her power over your wondering admiration. There you are, outwitted, after all; for the tree unfolded every leaf while you slept. So the grass springs, and the dandelions are born, — by magic, in a twinkling, myriads at once, — so that yesterday they were unheard of, and to-day they

possess the earth in their gay panoply and simple golden pomp.

The trees are the great mitigators and temperers of the elements to man. They shelter us from the fury of the rain and snow, yet conserve it for our gradual use. They shade us from the glare of the open sun, yet in time furnish us with heat and light. A treeless country is not the best of countries. Its usefulness is limited and specialized. A normal earth for man has both forest and prairie. But these are only the gross material blessings of the trees. There remains all their beauty.

How few of us ever heed those goodly, patient friends of man. We go forth and rifle the wilderness of its laurel or its arbutus, but not one in ten among us knows a beech from a maple, nor a pine from a spruce. It is a part of our dense indifference to everything save personal luxury. But a nation which does not know one tree from another is in peril of vanishing from the earth. Puny

dwellers in cities, let us get down to earth more often than we do.

I suppose one's love of trees changes like one's love of everything else. At one time of life we adore the oak; at another the elm commands our allegiance. It is a matter of circumstance and environment, since each tree differs from its fellow and each is lovely after its kind. To name the elm is to have a vision of great meadows, and summer barns, and fields of hay, and sweeps of blue river. The elm is a lover of such scenes, and if we have lived through them in youth, its swaying, feathery top will always recall the memories of that perished time, — remembrances of a native country, of intervale lands, with some great river winding slowly down between the hills, blue under the summer sky. There are its broad, deep-soiled islands, shoulder high with hay, where the few gray, wide-chinked barns stand awaiting their harvest. Along the edges of the islands are a few chokecherries and water maples, but no great trees save the

stately elms here and there, solitary under the blue.

Or, again, it may be the marvellous maple of the north that would enlist all your friendship. Its brave scarlet and golden coat makes the autumn world a mediæval crusade for brilliancy and courage. It is surely impossible to be craven or hopeless in the face of such gorgeous beauty! October in the mountains, when the maples are in all their splendour, is no time for the trifling or the mean. To see those beautiful trees arrayed for the closing days of the year is to partake of the nobleness of nature. While we know it not, something of that wondrous Oriental richness of colour enters into our subtler make-up, and we arise on the morrow with unguessed acquisitions of soul.

Again, there are the pines. And how different the pine regions of the south from those of the north. There is one thing, however, that marks a pine-tree, one quality in which none of the other children of the forest can

rival it — its delicacy of line against the sky. No other tree throws on the pale blue curtain so graceful a tracery of tiny pencillings. Look at the branch of a pine-tree in the twilight seen clear against the open heaven. And so, indeed, you may run through your list of acquaintance among the trees. Note the shaft of the spruce, the trembling leaf of the aspen set on differently from all other leaves, and the sound of the palms like the patter of rain, and the colour of the beech boles. A master could write a volume on any one of these traits. On some mountainside, where the wildest thrushes prefer to dwell, and where beech-trees come to their perfection, note, the next time you pass, the beautiful gray and blue and purple of those smooth-barked boles. The trunk of a full-grown beech is subject enough for any painter. Like Monet's haystack, it might be painted in a hundred lights, and still stand there unexhausted in suggestion and beauty.

When Arnold was in America our tulip-

trees took his fancy, and he wished to be remembered when they come in flower. So every season has its distinctive tree; the dark-painted fir full of snow in midwinter, and the greenish-white flowered chestnuts showing pale in the forests of July. But at all times of the round year the trees of the wild forest are there, only waiting to be known and loved.

The Ritual of Nature

The Ritual of Nature

ALWAYS and everywhere the law of strict congruity obtaining in nature, is not less wonderful than the law of universal variation. Before my window a cherry-tree is waving in the sunlight; it bears some thousands of leaves, no two of which are precisely alike; yet it is itself only one of hundreds of other cherry-trees within eyeshot, while they again are a mere handful of all the cherry-trees in the State. And still of these myriads of leaves, you could not place one down upon another and find them to match precisely. There would be some slight difference of outline, a dent here, a point there, — the individual idiosyncrasy of the leaf. Yet all these cherry

leaves conform to the type and character which they have gradually developed for themselves. They are great sticklers for tradition, these leaves; they allow complete personal liberty, within certain limits. If you are a cherry leaf you may be as odd and queer as you please, so long as you remain a cherry leaf. It is ordered, however, that you must so far conform to the character of your race as to be distinguishable from the elms and the alders. Latitude is allowed, but degrees of latitude are found necessary.

It would seem, then, that Nature is strictly a formalist in dealing with her tribes, that she permits them just so much liberty of action and freedom of thought as shall conserve the interest of the individual, and not enough to imperil the integrity of the sect. "Dwell in harmony," she seems to say, "all you multitudes of differing schools. Be yourselves, each as distinct as you please; every individual by himself distinguished from his brother, yet not alien. Let there be no in-

fringing on the borders of your fellow tribes." So that with all her tolerance the Great Mother still limits personal whim, still forbids fancy to overstep the bounds of reasonable divergence, still humours ambition but discourages arrogance, and still mitigates the pride of life in her children by imposing a frontier beyond which they shall not pass. Surely from her immemorial custom the open-minded observer will learn the double precept of perfect liberty in perfect obedience, and her service, too, is perfect freedom. The lesser gospel of the leaves, like the greater gospel of the sages, is the utmost range of will within the utmost bounds of law. Each after his kind shall thrive and prosper as it was in the beginning, and none shall transcend his apportioned sphere. So that in the stupendous hierarchy whose visible temple is the dome of blue, whose worshippers are the congregations of the all-growing creatures, there is promulgated the dogma of limitations.

In proof of this, behold the rituals of the

forest! The aspiration of the maples taking shape, after the traditions of their ancestors for a thousand generations, in one form, the aspiration of the pines in another. To the tanager one peculiar intonation, and to the song-sparrow another. The litany of the white-throat and the psalm of the thrush. Whatever may be in the dark mind of the owl, he is given but few words to express it; the plaintive iterations of the whippoorwill must serve him in lieu of a more voluminous chant; and who shall say that brilliant utterance of the bobolink is sufficient for him? Yet it is all he has. And none shall transcend his allotted ritual, nor praise the Power in forms unprescribed.

To be a bystander, therefore, an individualist, a radical, a nonconformist, is the one atrocious crime in nature. All this seeming rigour of differentiation is only the first glimpse of a world which is one, whole, single, indivisible. At first sight it appears that our brother the cherry is alien in race to our

cousin the peach; so they may be by our faulty terms of distinction. But the scientists affirm that all classification is but more or less convenient; that it is never absolute, nor accurate beyond a certain point; that characteristics melt and merge into one another, so that often it is impossible to tell this species from that; and various forms of life are blended like the colours of the spectrum.

How came the woodthrush to outstrip the robin in song? And why is the fox still the wolf's better in intelligence? By attempting, by aspiration, by daring the unknown and achieving the untried.

While, therefore, there are two observances in the ritual of Nature, the duty of obedience, and the duty of adventure, the latter is the greater of the two. The seed which is placed in dry bin is secure, and will last a hundred years intact; its fellow which is thrust into the moist earth takes a thousand chances of death for the one chance of glorious energy, growth, and perfection. Following the law

of obedience it would live to see its offspring spread through the forest, cover the earth with shade, and fulfil the offices of the ritual appointed for its kind.

Yet every leaf, every bud that sprang from that courageous fecundity would only conform to the pattern of his tribe so much and no more. There would remain to each his own character, his individuality, his own mode of worship, if one may say so. And it is just this increment of variation, for ever at play in the forces of the universe, that makes for progress, interest, truth. So that while we admire the sober catholicity of Nature, and keep in mind her singleness of brotherhood, we are to reverence her boundless liberality still more.

I have no doubt our friend the cherry-tree is well content to be himself, " imperial, plain, and true;" also, I have no doubt that deep in his sappy heart there lurks the patient power which in time will make him enlarge

his ritual, ennobling his worship, and spreading wider the gospel according to St. Cherry. For the abiding unrebellious spirit is good, but the divine unrest is good, too.

Concerning Pride



Concerning Pride

PRIDE has long been enrolled among the vices which we should abhor, — has been execrated by the church, and condemned by popular consent as a spiritual attribute to be eradicated; and there is a sort of pride, or a degree of pride, which is altogether personal, petty, and unworthy, and which is only saved from being most offensive by being ridiculous.

Pride, however, is essentially and fundamentally one of the virtues, not one of the vices. Pride, if you analyze it, seems to be one of the component parts of love. For in love there is an unreasoned, incomprehensible attraction for another, which draws us often in spite of our better judgment, in spite of

our finer instinct, and which we call the physical element of love. It is not at all an ignoble quality, as many have mistakenly fancied. It is not a quality of which to be ashamed, or of which we should try to rid ourselves. It is probably governed by reasons more complex and subtle than we comprehend. And powerful as it is, its mandates must be given their due weight.

Physical attraction, or the primitive blind forceful bidding of cosmic nature, is only a third of love, however. There are two other constituents, equally important. The second constituent is spiritual, and partakes of the nature of worship or reverence, and leads to those beautiful enduring acts of devotion which we so commonly associate with the idea of love. But the third constituent of the passion of love is pride. Love manifests itself in our bodies as instinctive craving, in our souls as devotion, and in our minds as pride.

No love is complete without pride. It is not enough that I feel an irresistible liking for

my friend, and that I rejoice in an unswerving devotion toward him. I must be able to retain my pride in him as well. My judgment must be able to consider him in all his dealings and find him good. When I can no longer take pride in my friend, there is only the ghost of love left. When he does that of which I must disapprove, perfect friendship is imperilled. I may continue to be devoted as before, but the fair relation of our lives is impaired. I can no longer give him that unqualified enthusiasm, that delightful zest of the spirit, which betokens a great friendship. When I think of him my thought is infected with sadness. I no longer love him with my whole being; my pride in him, for the time being at least, has suffered injury.

Just so in the relations of men and women, pride is the savour of love. Adam is enamoured of Eve, first by propinquity, second by admiration, lastly by unselfish devotion. But the admiration, the pride in Eve's traits and accomplishments, is at first probably much

more than one-third of Adam's feeling toward her. And all through their courtship Eve has enough intuitive wisdom to foster this pride of Adam's toward herself; and Adam, taught by the same wise nature, knows without thinking that he must be his best before Eve. Then follows the ceremony, the sad enthrallment, which appears to be necessary still, and which is so often fatal to love. But why fatal? Why should marriage be so indubitably a means of the destruction of love? Why is it so rarely the ideal relation which we persist in pretending it is?

Is it not because of disillusion? And does not the disillusion follow from carelessness?

No sooner has Eve become Mrs. Adam than she takes Adam's love for granted. She begins to rely on her marriage certificate. That terrific document is endowed with so much real and manifest power over the will and the action of her companion that she inevitably comes to consider Adam's heart as firmly bound as Adam's person. Little by

little she neglects those instinctive admonitions of her nature, which would bid her always appeal to Adam's pride in her. She no longer feels it necessary to please him, to appear to best advantage in his sight. He is only her husband; it doesn't matter. She "braces up" "for company," but when "only Adam" is at home she may go as slipshod and negligent as she pleases.

And Adam? Well, Adam doesn't shave every day now. There will be no one at breakfast but Eve. When the dinner is not good he can grumble a little, if there is no one present but his wife. He, too, has forgotten that pride is one-third of love.

So Adam and Eve reveal to each other their petty faults, their insignificant flaws of character, which so little care would hide; the admiration of each for the other is gradually destroyed; pride is allowed to die, and with the death of pride love receives a mortal wound. Oh, Eve, how can you be so foolish? How can you imagine that any silly writing

upon paper will bind an immortal being to you, when you allow that being's pride in you to be outraged every day? And oh, Adam, what a fool you must be to allow Eve to suffer one moment's disillusion in regard to you! If you cannot retain the love of Eve, it is your fault, very often, and not hers; and you deserve to lose her. And if she cannot command your continual regard, ten to one it is her own fault and not yours.

Of all the causes which make for the overthrow of love and the destruction of happiness between men and women, (so sad and, alas, so common!), surely none is surer nor more frequent than this loss of pride. Yet some men are so fatuous that they will not allow others to retain any illusion in regard to themselves. They insist on revealing all their weaknesses, with a fond notion that an engaging frankness is better than deception. Not so. No man has the power of reaching his own ideal, unless he inculcates that ideal of himself in the minds of others.

But noble, generous, wise, and modest pride is not a virtue much in vogue in our day. Are we not apt to think that democracy consists in making ourselves no better than our neighbours? Whereas true democracy implies only the free and fair chance to each man to be his best. The capacity for being one's best remains unchanged; and the duty of being one's best stands as obligatory as ever. I believe in freedom for all (the wise man might say), because I believe in it for myself, in order that I may realize my better and greater self. And to do this one must have pride, — pride that keeps one erect and unflinching to the last, — pride that insists on scrupulous manners, admirable breeding, deep culture, and impeccable self-control, — pride that preserves for ever the beautiful and radiant illusions of the soul. For without pride in ourselves, in our work, and in each other, life becomes sordid and vulgar and slovenly; the work of our hands unlovely; and we ourselves hopeless and debased.

Of Breeding



Of Breeding

If pride is the essence of respect for one's self, breeding is, we may almost say, the habit of respect for others. It is pride made generous, pride thoroughly purged of selfishness. The constant habit of regard for our neighbour and our friend is surely one of the prime requisites of a comfortable life among mortals. The exaltation of the *ego* is an essence of progress and the aim of perfection; but the recognition of many an *alter ego* about us is equally imperative. The failure to perceive their existence, appreciate their differences, and make allowance for their varying needs, must result in disaster to ourselves.

First of all things I know my own likes and dislikes, desires, wants, failings, aspirations,

pleasures, joys, sorrows, and fears; and I instinctively proceed to live my life about these fundamental facts. If I have a measure of wisdom I try so to balance these natural forces as to produce in my character some faint similitude of that ideal of personality which his imagination reveals to every man, — striving in the course of years to approach ever nearer and nearer the true self which I feel I am capable of becoming. Always to keep this beautiful image in sight, always to be hoping for its realization in ourselves, never to despair of one day accomplishing even in this life our longed-for wish, — this is the gist of culture. And it is pride, — honest, wise, unselfish, tolerant pride, — that must be our mainstay in that splendid impossible struggle, that strife for perfection which we must for ever wage, and which brings its rich results hour by hour, though we seem to fail at last.

There is no more imperative or more becoming duty than self-culture, — bodily, mental, spiritual. For surely, in so delightful and

wonderful a world, we cannot be too eager or too persistent to make ourselves in every degree worthy of life. Our instinct every day cries out for larger endeavour and more glorious achievement than we have yet known. Each morning we look upon creation and are dumbly aware of the call of opportunity, and the spirit within us resolves to do. Not a mortal in the universe but has said to himself, "I will." And in the evening we are aware of determinations unfulfilled. Perhaps these failures in accomplishment are all there is of imperfection upon earth. Perhaps all we need to do, in order to touch immortal happiness and partake of immortal life, is to attain our own ideal once, and once for all. A possibility almost beyond the likelihood of human grasp! And yet it is not in man's nature to despair, save at times; for the most part we are buoyant with the elation of expectancy, and taste the relish of confidence. In all the drift of existence, the trend which energy fol-

lows from nothingness to beauty, pride is the indwelling active spirit, the regulating power.

But pride is not enough, culture of self is not enough, joy in self-growth is not enough. Indeed, in itself alone, and of itself alone, self-culture cannot subsist. We cannot for an instant maintain our being without dependence on circumstance and surrounding. From within we know the impulse of self-assertion — in the largest, best sense; but from perception we see that the world is an agglomeration of other beings like ourselves, no one of which is more important than another. And the conclusion comes in on us that we too are each of us no more than an atom, and that as our relations with others are inevitable, so they should be considerate. While natural egotism makes us insistent, our first intelligent glance at the world should make us plastic. Yet so stubborn is spirit, so tenacious of life at all hazards, that it does not easily concede to others those rights it demands for itself. The habit of doing this is the aim of breeding.

The disinterested mind perceives that for the perfection of selfhood unselfishness is necessary. That which I forego in consideration for others shall return to me again in conscious rectitude and self-respect.

As pride is a part of love, the instinctive foresight of the loving spirit, and exhibits itself in nobleness and worthiness, so breeding is the habit of these moral qualities. For in the moral world breeding is not merely tradition and inherited custom; it is the training and individual culture needful for perfection of character. Breeding makes habitual those traits and actions which otherwise we would only display at rare moments of inspiration.

Kindness, gentleness, civility, manners, contentment, sweetness, constancy, devotion, — these are some of the results and evidences of breeding. In breeding the character acquires temper, as a piece of steel does in the process of manufacture, and is no longer malleable as iron, but firmer, more trustworthy and susceptible of polish, and far more elastic and sensi-

tive. Breeding prescribes this and that, limits the whim of the individual, curtails choice and enforces submission, and yet not excessively, but only for the sake of the greater ultimate perfection of all. In our battle for individualism we must remember that Nature has probably endowed all of her children with a superabundance of egotism. Just as she creates myriads of seeds on thousands of trees, with the chance of only a very few coming to maturity; so she endows us with enormous egotism, that her ends may be served, and that we may be in no danger of extinction through indifference. It by no means follows, however, than we can make use of all our egotism, or even a large part of it. We ought cheerfully to recognize the fact that very often the individual will is destined to disappointment. It is right for you and me to insist on our own way, as pride and impulse bid; yet, if we could have our utmost will, we should be flourishing to an unheard-of extent, to the cost and detriment of all nature.

Breeding teaches the necessary resignation of small and selfish aims, and inculcates an unfailing endeavour on behalf of society. Good breeding is scrupulous in requiring the sacrifice of our own comfort for that of others. It makes us for ever tireless in obeying our own good impulses. The vulgar may be kind and generous and loving. But only the well-bred are tireless in observing the smallest and nicest amenities. For wisdom knows how lazy we are and how readily we fall into habits of slovenly conduct even toward those whom we love most dearly; it therefore creates the code, and supplies the culture, to aid us in our difficult task. Life without breeding is food without savour; it is art without form. Only the shallow mind will imagine that perfection may be gained without the generous helps which breeding alone can supply.

Of Serenity

Of Serenity

SERENITY is a sort of spiritual capital; it is that residuum of spiritual production which remains over to assist future production. If we have no serenity left after a spiritual experience of any kind, we may be sure that our life, to that extent at least, has been in vain.

Do you read, do you smoke, do you dine, do you take a walk, do you visit a picture show? What is the residue of impression left on your mind when the hour is past? If it is one of pleasurable content, an increment of quiet happiness, the experience has been worth while. If it is one of uneasy excitement, you have gained nothing. You have toiled unprofitably. For the spirit, like the body, must see the result of its labour; and that result

is a fund of abiding serenity. How else are we to face the future and the unknown without perturbation? If our whole existence is to be made up of excitement, how shall fortitude survive? Those people who think to lose their unhappiness in a chain of endless activity, accomplish only a temporary alleviation for themselves. The more engrossed they become in mere activity for its own sake, the more futile will it seem to them at last. Rather than increasing their store of serenity against the foul weather of poverty or age or decrepitude, they have been spending it lavishly in the thousand channels of strenuous activity.

As Emerson has it somewhere, our real life is in the silent moments. It may be in the pauses of conversation, during the midday rest by a running water, or after the guests are gone and the coals settle in the grate; but the inner life does not receive its pleasure or its nourishment in the doing of things; its normal joy is in accessions of serenity; it subscribes

willingly to Stevenson's saying that gentleness and cheerfulness are above all morality, — are the greatest virtues.

Yet this is no plea for idle shiftlessness. The inert and careless, who are incorrigible bystanders at the great pageant of life, seldom taste true serenity. They are for ever infected with a feverish dissatisfaction. The slow malaria of inefficiency is in their bones. Too supine for effort or accomplishment, they miss the zest of relaxation, and dribble away their days in a woebegone dyspeptic indolence. They have no proper conception of the joys of leisure; they are as unfortunate as those who must be for ever on the go. It has never occurred to them to take hold of this life sturdily in their two hands, to work with a will, to play with a will, to loaf with a will.

But the wise man yields himself to the moment; he is glad of the relish in toil, glad of the serenity in rest. He does not belong to the leisure class nor yet to the working class; for in his philosophy there should be no lei-

sure class; leisure should be common as air or water, for men to take as they need; and work should be as delightful as leisure. There are thousands of men who do not know how to rest, who have almost no faculty of enjoyment; but there never yet was a man who did not love work, — his own proper work in the natural exercise of his powers.

In any case, to be serene does not mean to be idle. For serenity of spirit may be kept in the midst of activity; and the most effective workers are those who are never hurried, never flustered, but retain in the thickest turmoil of daily life an imperturbable demeanour and steadiness of mind. Your nervous individual, whose fund of serenity is low, rushes about in a frenzy of fussy excitement, achieving nothing but his own destruction. In that most detestable of all vulgarisms, he is a "hustler." God help him! He is distraught with a mental rabies; he has been bitten by the greed or envy of commercialism, or some other of the black dogs of modern civilization,

and his finish will not be a wholesome thing to see.

Our day has almost made it seem true that to live without madness, one must live without haste. The man engaged in active business, as it is called, is very much in the position of a ranchman in a stampede. If he loses his head through a moment's agitation, his doom is written. He must preserve in the irrational whirl around him at least a remnant of serenity. To be wholly engrossed in his surroundings, to lose his self-command, is destruction.

Serenity is the atmosphere of poise, the still air in which the nicely adjusted balance of all our powers may be maintained. To preserve it we should be willing to sacrifice everything but life itself. Yet it is not to be had in exchange for any possession or characteristic. It is a habit, a moral attribute, a mode of thinking; it is one of the tides of the mind. And like so many of the best things in our mortal existence, it is greatly a matter of

temperament. All men are born in bondage and unequal; and some are blessed by the fairy godmother with happier dispositions than others. Still there is no despair for any of us; if we have not the benign temper, the temperament which makes for happiness, it is our first business to acquire it. Why go through this world perpetually disgruntled, when men will concede so much to a smile? He who is serene commands a digestive that defies dyspepsia and will carry the buoyancy of youth into the ruts of old age.

When you pass from the realm of actual life into the realm of art, serenity becomes the noblest of all attributes. In the world of beauty, where every line, every shade, every tone, is adjusted in considerations of permanence, how shall we tolerate anything that is not serenely alive? An art in which there is no serenity can no more mirror nature and human life for us, than a ruffled stream can reflect the trees above it.

Play

Play

It is a word long discredited, but never forgotten and sure to return to honour among men. For play is not an invention of luxurious idleness, but simply one of the phenomena of earth, a necessity of our mortal state. Think of play as meaning freedom from stress, freedom from restraint. The play of a bolt or a beam in construction is often fatal; and yet without play how often a mechanism would come to wreck! The play of the forest trees in wind is their safeguard; and when an ice-storm falls on them and locks them down to the rigidity of iron, then beware of the living winds of heaven that come boisterously down upon them! Their fettered limbs snap, their poor bodies are riven and

split, their noble heads go down to the shades and they are counted in the refuse of the world. With no give, with no relaxation, with no play, their usefulness is done; they must perish.

The rocks may stand fast to our sight, but we can measure the enormous play of a glacier, and the ordered play of the spheres is our constant admiration. Indeed, you will find in nature that everything has play, according to the need of its being, and the higher and more complex the life, the greater the amount of play necessary to safety. As you pass from the solid and fixed frame of the globe outward toward light and warmth, think how play is given to the creatures born in the sun. First the mosses and lichens and stunted herbage of cold regions, then the more luxurious trees and grasses and waving ferns; the fish in the water; the moving rivers, the stupendous tides; the beasts that traverse the ground; the hosts of birds migrating and dancing through space; and, frailest of all the myriads of

ephemera, those beautiful scraps of winged colour that go sailing away light as thistle-seed on the perilous adventures of the air; life, the varied and untold play of motion and colour over the surface of the dull ground, the fact of being, clothed with the phantom of beauty, — this is the flux of existence. This helped to give rise to the " Everything is flowing " of the Greeks.

So from core to verge, from inertia to intelligence, from crude to complex, there is always a greater and greater play allowed, until we come to the region (true or fabulous) of pure spirit, where being may have its essence unhampered by place or time. We do not know much of the dominion of unincarnate soul, but we are agreed in according it the utmost latitude of come and go and in denying it all fixity save that of purpose. And we speak of the play of the mind, the free play of the intellect.

Still with the idea of play as meaning scope, spread, activity, we know that educa-

tion comes through achievement alone; that the building of character from habit is wrought out only through the play of the individual will. Stultify the will, prohibit its play, and you have at once destroyed its power of growth. The principle of life is movement, and stagnation is death. So that if a thing has no play, you may be sure it has no life.

So, too, if you will follow the trail of the word into meaning of playfulness and amusement; perhaps you will not be far wrong if you declare that play means health. Play is the fine flavour of the spirit, the expression of joy. Just as we gain freedom for the play of our powers, we gain enjoyment in the playfulness of spirit. The animals play, and man in a normal, healthy state takes the universe for his playroom. To be a doleful, puritanic, unsocial Pharisee is to be a degenerate. A sour visage means debauchery of the soul, as truly as other appearances indicate bodily intemperance. To keep the Ten Commandments is not the whole business of man, not his whole

duty; it is only a beginning, a crude makeshift of conduct; and the law of love by which they were superseded brings us nearer to perfection.

Think of the added zest we might have if only we set ourselves to play the rôle assigned us for half its proper worth. To act with sincerity, with ease, with unfailing graciousness; to add ever so little to the store of gaiety; to relieve the monotony of work; to soothe unconquerable sorrow; to go lightly and pleasantly across the boards, and leave a sense of elation and good nature as we pass; this is the method to make us not regret our exit, and, what is more to the purpose, this is the sort of play to make our fellows the happier for our acting, however small the part.

The Scarlet of the Year



The Scarlet of the Year

I.

THE beautiful changes of the seasons come upon us so furtively, and yet so surely, that their appearance seems sudden at last. Day by day, through the dry glow of August, we say, "The summer is waning; soon we shall see the hills all crimson; even now there is a touch of Indian summer in the atmosphere, though the air is so warm." And then, after all, it takes us by surprise some morning to look up and see a solitary tree all scarlet on the mountain. Yet his message was imperative and could suffer no delay; prompt as the first April robin, there he must appear, to do

the bidding of those great primary powers we are pleased to call Nature.

Yes, it is quite true, as some one remarked the other day editorially (I have forgotten where), we are for ever being exhorted to worship Nature, to turn from our overstrenuous diligence, our overcentralized life, and come back to the primitive conditions of the great outdoor world. True, that is our native air; we shall reap good from it in abundance, if we are wise; and I, for one, should be glad to see the whole town turned out into the woods for three months every year. Ah, how gladly would they be turned out if they could! But that is our fault, my friend, yours and mine and the next man's; and it is a poor lesson we have learned from this great Nature, if we have not taken the hint of generosity, if we have not learned tolerance, if we have not been infected with a lofty and unflinching sweetness, which is full of care for others' joy as well as our own.

What do they say, these scarlet priests of

the hills? Now the maples have put on their valiant colours, and the ash and beech are robed in the light of yellow and bronze; the birches, too, and the wayfaring tree are all in bright array. What is the meaning of so great a pomp and splendour? Why the gayest, bravest tints in the season of decay, at the time of universal perishing?

There is no answer. Even if science could tell just the use of colour in the scheme of life, we should have our metaphorical or symbolistic sense still unsatisfied. Meanwhile the gladness of autumn is undoubted; the strong heartening note is sounded everywhere above the dismal ruin of summer beauty. Indeed, it is only a merging of the lesser beauty into the greater. And one fancies (fantastically, indeed) that only in the New World is the year's death made so glorious, as if not until now could men ever imagine that death is anything but ruin.

"No, indeed," say the scarlet priests of the mountains; "behold in the midst of unfaded

April green we don our brightest robes, and give you the New Message, — even we, the lowly folk of the forest, the inarticulate people of the wilderness. We would have you to know that the gladness of the spring is nothing to our gladness. In the childhood of your race, you worshipped youth and love; but now that you are grown you shall worship love and maturity. And death itself shall not be sad to you any more; but in natural sorrow you shall still valiantly rejoice. For it is better to triumph than to hope; it is better to dare than to desire. What do they know of the fulness of life, who have never endured the rending wind and the riving frost? Hear us, and we will show you a better way than the pageant of the buds or the riot of perishable June! Fortitude, gladness, patience, a smiling front in face of disaster, these be your watchwords for ever!"

This, you say, is only our own thought put in the mouth of the forest people. But who shall say how much of our natural resignation

may not have come, by subtle and potent influences, from these very children of the mountainside? And who can tell how great has been the effect of the splendour of autumn on our idea of perfection? The forces of suggestion and association are so mysterious and so strong, so delicate in their hidden working, that one's thoughts about the solemnities of death and the completion of life might well come from sources as frail as a turning leaf or a seeding thistle.

Where, then, is the influence of the scarlet of the year found in our art? How does it make itself felt in those works of our hands which represent us as a race? Think of the artists you know, writers or painters or creators of the beautiful in any form; in whose work among them all do you find the brave scarlet note? It is not felt everywhere, certainly. You would not say that Arnold has it, beloved and lovely as he is. His is the gray-green of a French forest or a southern olive grove. You would not say it is in Ten-

nyson; his colour is purple, the rich ennobled tinge of dignity and meditation. And the pre-Raphaelites? Certainly they have colour to spare, but not in the sense I mean. It is not their province to raise a response to any cheer from the troubled heart of their days. But in Emerson and Browning, there you may see at once the interpreted gospel of the scarlet leaf. The English poet never saw a bit of the New World forest in its raw brilliancy of fall; but do you not feel sure it would have delighted him — at once so subtle and so barbaric?

And to whom, but to him and Emerson, are we to turn for that assurance to the spirit which Nature is preaching in her own dumb way from a thousand mountainsides to-day? There is another, too, whom common consent of criticism holds in lower esteem, but for whom I cannot help having an equal love. I am not sure that one does not love him, so human, so humane, so modest and kindly, even more than any of the greater masters. And on every page he wrote you will find traces of this

scarlet glory, this unquelled triumphant festival of the spirit, putting failure and defeat aside for ever. Who is there who loves men and books and nature, and can witness the gay procession of scarlet on the hills, without a thought of unconquerable Robert Louis?

II.

In the first blush of our autumnal season, it is the splendour and scarlet of it that most appeal to us. The green-feasted eye, full of the luxurious leisure of the quiet foliage, picks out at once the first fleck of crimson, conspicuous as a stain, — a spilth of blood or wine on the vest of nature. This is the sign, the presage, the portent of rehabilitation; and we must leap at heart for the valiant tinge. It is the colour of war, of energy, of manliness, of fortitude, of endurance, linking us with our primitive instincts, calling up the dejected

spirit to new endeavours, heartening the discouraged and reviving the worn.

" Courage, O divine vagabond," it seems to say, " already the turn of the road is here, the banners of the Delectable City are in sight. Brace, thee, then, for one effort more. Am I not the symbol to thee of triumph? Do not lassitude and doubt and cynicism flee before me? Why, then, ever be faint-hearted again? To-day is thine, and the promise of the morrow is in my hand."

But when the first impression of the scarlet world has worn off, when the sense becomes accustomed to so much magnificent display, we perceive other beauties, new and strange, mingling with the red. The softer, subtle richness of the tapestry comes out; elusive and lovely shades, unperceived at first, reveal themselves to the studious and enraptured gaze. It is not the raw splendour of the barbaric kingly show that is most powerful over us; there are shyer hidden influences of pale attractiveness as well, here a scrap of pure

yellow, there a tint of sheer purple or blue or lavender.

It seems to me that I have never known a year half so voluptuous in colours as this. Is it not so? Before September had left the hills, every one was aware of the unusual lavishness and wonderful beauty of pigment. Only in dreams or in fairy tales could such pomp be possible. The leaves unwithered kept all their fresh perfection of June, with the added marvel of crimson or russet. One gazed across the mountain valleys from peak to peak as across a scarlet world. And in the silent, brooding air it would not have been incredible to people that wonderland with all the shapes of fancy from Homer's time to ours. You said to yourself, "Surely, I shall never see the like of this again," and then bade a sorrowful farewell to those high stretches of red hill and sweeping air.

And yet the shore in its more sober garb was just as wonderful, just as unusual. If the hills were arrayed like kings, the marshes and open

fields of the seaboard were emperors of their own dominion, too. In the first days of October a drenching storm and chilly twilight landed me at one hospitable hearthstone on the south shore. The wind was out of the northeast, gusting and quarrelsome, and it caught a traveller unprepared. There could be no joy of nature in such weather; protection, friends, and fire were the only things. But the next morning uprose one of those matchless days which seem to come on purpose to belie our gloomy apprehension. The clear sky, the drying roads, the fresh, wholesome wind, the talking leaves, and the far-off sparkle of the sea. The most confirmed morning hater could not refrain from a stroll before breakfast. In that new world by a quiet, woody road, some hours later our mother Autumn showed me her latest study in raw colour. Side by side above the stone wall stood a crimson maple and a yellow poplar. As you looked up in passing the light struck through them from behind you, drenching their pure tints in lux-

urious living light, on a background of the unmitigated blue.

"There," I said, "is the trinity of colour," — the blue which was nothing but blue, the yellow which was nothing but yellow, and the other crimson. You might study them at your ease. Look straight into the deep red of the maple before you, or into the yellow of the aspen to your right, or into the blue between them. Then aloft where the tops swayed across the sky, you got the contrast of the red with the yellow. Look steadily a moment at the warm red of the maple cut against that cerulean hanging, and try to feel its meaning; then shift your eyes to the yellow.

It does not do to be fanciful on paper, however one may dream between sunrise and sunset. But I am sure you would agree to the greater nobility of the spiritual yellow, as contrasted with the burly physical red. And behind them all the incorruptible blue, the primal thought. There lay the deep strong tone of the blood-red tree, so physical, so sure,

so unabashed and sufficient. And beside it the sheer ethereal tremulousness of the yellow, — the colour of spirit, the colour that makes us feel. But before ever we could move or love, there was the great blue thought which comprehended the beginning and overarches the whole.

If you think of these elementary colours as symbols of certain qualities, you will see something more than a mere wayward fancy in such a title as "The Red Fairy Book," or "The Blue Fairy Book." You will think of colour not merely as an attribute of this good world, but as an index of our own inward emotional life as well. It is as if, when all the earth lay finished from the hand of the great Artifex, perfect in construction, lovely in form, waiting only the final impulse, he had smiled above his work, and that benign look was communicated to the new-made handicraft in the guise of colour, — a superfluous manifestation of beauty, the very breath or spirit of the Creator.

And ever since, to keep us in mind of the

Creator's heritage of joy, colour remains on the face of the world, a possession of the spirit. They who deal in its appreciation and expression are peculiarly the guardians of a sacred trust, receiving from it intimations of finer significance than the average eye can gather, and expressing through it the most intimate and delicate thoughts and yearnings.

Good Fortune



Good Fortune

"HENCEFORTH I ask not good fortune, I myself am good fortune," says Whitman. But under what conditions? He enunciates this happy wisdom in the poem where he has just declared, "Afoot and light-hearted, I take to the open road." Good fortune, he would seem to say, resides in freedom, in immunity. Yet there is more than that necessary. It is not enough to sell all we have; we must follow in the Way. Good fortune is not an endowment of circumstance merely; it is rather a tenet of the mind, a mood of the spirit, and a physical attribute. It comes to us like a strain of harmonious being, when our complex nature is in accord with the visible world, and attuned to its own secret note.

"Afoot and light-hearted," no ill-fortune can overpower us. In the pursuit of happy, primitive exercise, the simple needs of the body are satisfied; and its magnetic enthusiasm is communicated to the spirit. Emancipated from roofs and windows, setting forth for the unknown, physical needs reduced to a minimum, we become adventurers and discoverers, touched with elemental daring (timorous, secluded creatures that we are!), elated by a breath of nature. It is so that good fortune comes to the traveller.

And is it not true that whenever we taste the sweet of life we are in this nomadic frame of mind? A certain sense of detachment and irresponsibility seems necessary to happiness, — a freedom purchased most cheaply, after all, at the price of obligations discharged and duties done. Good fortune, true success, is the indwelling radiance and serenity that comes and goes so mysteriously in every human tenement. Expect her not, and she arrives; seek to detain her with elaborate argu-

ment or excuse, and she is gone. Yet must the door ever be open for her coming, and the board spread for her entertainment. So fleeting and incalculable is the best, so outside our own control, that we say it comes by the grace of God.

Let this be so, indeed. Still the avenues for the approach of happiness are to some extent surely within our own control. To be clean and temperate and busy, to try to keep ourselves strong and healthy, not to wear injurious clothes, nor to follow pernicious customs, to simplify the mechanism of living and enrich the motive, and to avoid fanaticism, this is the part of wisdom. It is first of all important, in seeking good fortune, that we should be able to secure coördination and sympathy between body, mind, and heart. To do this, evidently, we must be adaptable, — must try to have the open mind, the spirit of charity, the available strength, and readiness of body. That folly is only too palpable which fancies that happi-

ness could be found in any one of the three natures that make up man. Certainly not in purely physical or sensual conditions does it flourish. We vainly seek it in creature comforts alone, in physical delights alone. Equally futile is our search for it in the kingdom of the mind. That is a noble fallacy, but a fallacy none the less, which pins its faith to knowledge. Time out of mind there have been those who hoped to find happiness in the affairs of the intellect, and still it has eluded them. His royal master said of Lanfranc, "The day is coming, I see it afar, when these thin men will set their feet upon our corselets." And there is always a tendency toward that extreme.

Then, too, how many are the children of joy, — those who pursue happiness in the wide bright fields of passion, — not the crude passions of the senses, but the delicate passions of the spirit! How many devotees, how many lovers! How many who have worn away their

lives in an ecstasy of longing or prayer or expectation. And yet the loftiest religious elation, the lonely frozen nobility of soul which belongs to the enthusiast and the believer, — cannot be called good fortune, but only a part of good fortune. It avails me nothing to see visions, if I am dyspeptic and cannot understand the *Pons assinorum*. The pugilist, the zealot, the bookworm, — each of these is but a third of a man, and none is more worthy than the other. An ignorant and brutalized athlete is just as far from complete manhood as a puny scholar or a blind bigot. And differential calculus alone is just as far from affording sufficient education as football is.

Our best ideals have long since ceased to uphold the supremacy of the body. But neither must we despise it, as the Puritans did. Rather should we keep in view the due culture and gradual perfection of body and mind and spirit, discountenancing any favour to one above another. For Whitman's ideal is the best. "I myself am good fortune."

And we should always aim to keep ourselves so healthy that every day, as we step out of doors, we can say after him, " Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road."

The Debauchery of Mood

The Debauchery of Mood

THERE are so many ways of making wreck of this perilous gift of life! A little too strenuous or a little too weak, a little too hot or a little too cold, a little too fast or a little too slow, a little too severe or a little too lax, and we are undone. So nice an adjustment seems to be needed to bring our lives to anything like success and a decent termination. So delicately are we balanced, as it were, on the very brink between sweeping current and relentless eddy. An overfrail physique, and all your splendid attainments of mind and lofty ambitions are brought prematurely to the ground. Or, again, a stout and hardy endowment of

body, and you may be undone by some unconquerable habit. For habit, like disease, is often hereditary, and as often contracted. It is germinal in its origin, but sure and virulent in effect. Who does not see in his own round of life a score of his friends undone by some minute lack, some flaw in the adjustment of their powers?

Yet the great world moves on. Even our own small life proceeds. For whether it be to failure or success, the first need of being is endurance, — to endure with gladness if we can, with fortitude in any event. This is the core of life; this is the kernel of nature. How then shall he contrive to keep always near that central truth, the progress of existence? How shall we manage to share the glad strength of the earth, in spite of pain and danger and sorrow and bitter disappointment? It is not quite enough to be stoical. Or, perhaps one ought to say, it is too much. For the stoics, one feels, were inclined to shut up the doors of the heart against the great currents of pity and love.

They hardly kept a welcome for joy; and when pleasure visited them, they were unprepared to make her at home. It seems there was too stubborn and negative a blend in their philosophy. To be stoical and nothing more is to be stolid. Whereas surely one should grow and change, be happy and sad, with changing and growing nature; nor should one always live indoors at the centre of one's self, but occasionally come to the entry of being to meet one's friends, to take the air of existence, to look abroad on the hills and valleys of universal life. One should not be unconscious of mood, in short.

Yes, mood is necessary; mood is good and helpful; and anyhow it is inescapable. He who defies it is a rash man and far from wise. It is only by taking advantage of mood, of the mysterious, uncharted, and invisible tides of the spirit, that we shall ever make any successful ventures upon the deep sea of life, or bring our craft safely to port at last. Whether in art, or in science, or in the affairs

of men, he who works with mood will be more successful than he who works without it. As for the mistaken man who sets himself to an accomplishment in defiance of his mood, time must teach him his own folly. He is like the daring and rebellious child who has never heard of the expression *Deo volente,* but purposes this or that, untempered by restriction, ignorant of fortune, defiant of fate.

In old times men governed their actions by the stars or by auspices. They would undertake nothing unless the planets were propitious; and if they failed conspicuously, then the gods were against them, or the time in their horoscope had not arrived. They waited upon the convenient season, and sought out many inventions for divining it. In later years we have made mood a god. To-day, if I would invest money, or see a friend, or write a letter, or buy a horse, or paint a picture, I no longer consult a soothsayer or con the pages of an ephemeris; I look into my own dark mind and say, "Am I in the mood for it?"

The Debauchery of Mood

We have made mood a touchstone of action. Our fathers made duty their priestess. It may be we are straying too far from their honourable faith, hard and narrow and cruel though it could be. But that was the evil of extremes. We may be in peril from the opposite error, and duty is a word that is dropping out of current use. Mood has usurped its place.

But there is a debauchery of mood, just as there is an insanity of duty. An unflinching observance of duty, unmodified by any other idea, by mercy, by love, by gentleness, by generosity, might readily lead to almost inhuman hardness. The devotee of duty may become an unlovely and pestiferous monomaniac, a burden to himself and an infliction to others. We all know how angular and sour and uncomfortable a fanatic can be. It matters not whether he is a religious fanatic or a free-thinker, his inordinate devotion to his one conception of life is a nuisance. He is so

stiff-necked that he cannot see anything outside of his own pasture. The beautiful plasticity of human nature at its best seems to have been left out of him.

On the other hand, how much better is your modern watery sentimentalist? Duty for him is an old fabulous fetich. He maunders and meanders down the pavements of life, as he would through a rose garden. He knows no law but the indulgence of whim and the obedience to mood. He may have no strong evil propensities, but his flabby subservience to mood is a spiritual debauchery in itself.

It is written in "The Book of St. Kavin," "Take heed lest ye be overtaken in debauchery of mood." And, indeed, it is a malady likely to attack the finest spirits. Knowing how essential mood is to the accomplishment of anything worth while, they wait upon its coming. Too seldom does it occur to them that mood is in any degree controllable. Yet it is so. And while we wait upon mood, we

must also order and direct it; for mood is like fire, a good servant, but an evil master. Have all your hopes and plans come to ground in a day? Has sorrow knocked at your door? Has circumstance foiled your most generous wish? Still there is this life to be lived, and road of fortitude to be followed. Wait not upon returning mood for your happiness, but set forward at once. Perchance then the mood will follow you, with sunny face. If not, still there is the satisfaction that your part in the work of the universe will not have been slighted. Rightly assimilated, adversity, that bitter tonic, may yet yield health and a smiling countenance. So at last we may attain a measure of nobility of character, so that mood will follow us like a patient sister, and we shall be feeble slaves of her caprice no more.

To sorrow, to misfortune, to anger, to hatred, do not give way. Have, if possible, a sane rule of conduct, and adhere to that gladly. For without adherence to some line of progress, how shall he hope for anything but drift-

ing discontent? Let us keep mood, but as a servant; and let us keep duty, — as a servant, too. For greater than either is the free spirit of man.

Of Moderation



Of Moderation



It is not the safety of moderation but its beauty and power that make it so excellent and so desirable a virtue. A controlled and regulated force is an agent that may make for usefulness, for good, for happiness; an uncontrolled force can be nothing but a menace.

At first glance we are apt to think somewhat slightingly of moderation. The good even seem somewhat tame and uninteresting in comparison with their more reckless and less responsible fellows. We are abashed at the presence of evil; we are horrified and confused that it should prevail; and yet we cannot altogether restrain a lingering tinge of admiration for its forceful procedure. We perceive that it does not restrain itself; that

it demands and often secures free play for its energies; its exhibition of efficient and capable power dazzles us. We are put out of conceit with respectability, and become half convinced that the bad is not half so bad, after all. We are ready to sneer at moderation.

But we make a mistake here, we mistake a supine and cowardly respectability for goodness. Now, respectability, mere respectability, is not goodness at all; it is only another form of weakness. The person who takes refuge among the respectable, without any further attempt to do actual good, to be actively good, is nothing but a poltroon, afraid to follow his bent. He will probably go to a worse place than is prepared for many a transgressor.

But respectability is not moderation; it is stagnation. There is no virtue in respectability, for virtue is an active principle, and the essence of respectability is dull, stupid, selfish, timid inaction. If you are good you may be respectable; but if you set for yourself no standard beyond the negative blamelessness

of being respectable you are on the highway to perdition. It is not goodness that fills your soul, but lethargy. You shudder at the criminal classes; you lull yourself with a cushioned chromo-Christianity, but your own spiritual and intellectual and material life is in itself a crime. You are an incumbrance to society, to say the least.

Moderation is a very different thing. It is the conservation of power. It is the saving grace which sweetens conduct. It makes virtue pleasant and kindly; it makes beauty to be of effect in the world; it makes reason prevail. Moderation is the wisdom which never quite exhausts its reservoirs of power; which never permits depletion, and is, therefore, never exhausted. It always has forces in reserve, and so triples the impression made by the forces it has in use. Moderation is not a penurious aversion to expenditure; it is a sane and strong disposition of power. It means control and efficiency.

The logic of extremes is notoriously uncer-

tain; the beauty of extremes is even more doubtful. Note that in extremes you have energy enough to waste, spending itself in its last expiring effort. But beauty must always embody power and reserve. There is no beauty in exaggeration and overemphasis, nor in the weakness of imperfection. Beauty in sculpture, for instance, resides in the consummate moment; beauty in painting, in the balance of hues. In everything beautiful, I think, one has the sense of exquisite moderation, a sense of poise, of expectancy, of reservation, as well as of satisfaction. One feels whether in music or poetry, whether in art or life, in contemplating beauty, that here the great spiritual force of the universe was brought into play and arrested for a moment in mid career. There is no strain, but only strength. As perfect and competent strength cannot know strain, so perfect beauty cannot know intemperance nor overstatement. Haste, anger, bigotry, sloth, all these destroy beauty, because they destroy moderation. They make

beauty in art and beauty in daily life alike impossible, for that one reason. They prevent us from living centrally and normally; they unhinge our poise; they cloud the mind, hamper the body, and make the spirit unhappy; they take away from us those rare moments of calm contentment, when the human soul stands on the brink of exaltation, half-way between hope and despair. They rush us into one extreme or another, so that we cannot come into full contact with the powers of the universe. They make us too emphatically our single selves, — petty, wilful, and unwise. They drive us to extremes. If I were a wave, I should belong most completely to the great surrounding sea, when I was at mid height between crest and trough. So my own human life is most nearly in accord with the greater life which, it seems, must infuse the universe, not when I am carried beyond the bounds of moderation, but I am at poise, a normal, undistracted being.

The idea is easily illustrated in many ways.

You may see many arts injured by lack of moderation. We build a huge opera house, for example, not content with a moderate size. What is the result? The singers must strain their voices to the limit, so that shading and all delicacy of interpretation are lost. So, too, in human speech. How much more convincing our conversation would be, if it were more moderate, — more moderate in its diction, its vocabulary, its tones, its inflections. Speech is a means of expression and may be beautiful, comprehensive, full of delight and power. Too often we permit it to become either a mumble or a shriek. We exaggerate and emphasize and insist, until all truth is lost and all power of conviction destroyed. Our personal expression becomes palpably false, frayed and worn thin by overstress. This is true of all physical habit; we rush and hurry, or we slouch and dawdle, regardless of the fact that by so doing we lose all spontaneity, all magnetism, all power which inherently belongs in beauty of motion.

Atmosphere

Atmosphere

In its secondary sense atmosphere is a word which is only lately come into common use. The artists, I suppose, have introduced it and given it currency. Atmosphere is to fact what the bloom is to the grape, — the mark of immaculate perfection, imperceptible to the casual or careless glance, yet full of wonder and charm to the thoughtful observer. Atmosphere is the aroma of spirit, the aura or emanation of being; and he is a happy artist who has the least command of such a perishable finish for his work.

One sees so often a picture or piece of sculpture, immensely clever, apt, refined, full of dignity, graceful in proportion, restful in line, of rich and harmonious colour, the idea trans-

ferred to the very life, and yet one can say of it: "Yes, but it has no atmosphere!" And there is the fatal sentence pronounced. Again, you come upon a creation which seems upon scrutiny to be a tissue of faults. There is nothing right about it; bad colour, bad drawing, false execution, slovenly technique; yet somehow, in spite of all that, even so poor a thing as this may tug at your sympathy; it may be able to cast a glamour over you for the moment, for all its badness. It may have atmosphere. True, this is unlikely, and a touch of atmosphere alone will not save a poor creation. Yet, how welcome, how delightful it is!

In people, too, as well as in facts and objects, atmosphere counts for so much. There are many personalities, only too many, in whom it is lacking. They are excellent, even irreproachable, citizens, and exemplary friends maybe; but they are purely negative or neutral; they seem to be invested with not a particle of mysterious envelopment which lends glamour to the individual, and irradiates

the character. Without atmosphere there may be force, directness, even beauty, but the utmost reach of power will be wanting. The hard light of character needs to be somewhat diffused and tempered by an atmospheric quality in its expression. And since expression is a matter of art, one is almost tempted to say that art consists in the creation of atmosphere. Be as faithful to reality (or to romance) as you please, but surround your transcription with an atmosphere; bestow upon it the magic air and colour which are its own indeed, but which shall still convince and transport us beyond the actual.

> "The little more, and how much it is;
> The little less, and what worlds away."

In matters of art it is "the little more" which is so all important; and the absolute reproduction of an incident or an object, if such a feat were possible, would mean something very like failure.

Also the painter is in danger of seeing too

much. He half closes his eyes for fear of seeing things exactly as they are. He would preserve the charm of atmosphere at all costs. He must either add something of his own to the canvas, or omit the minuteness of detail in his rendering of a subject, in order to arrest the air and the illusion of nature. But at all hazards he will avoid what science would count the truth. Your line must have just sufficient indecision to betray (I should say, to reveal) the human hand that drew it. For this is the touch of living sympathy, more important than the dead accuracy of the machine. To transfer to canvas or print something of the vitality of the original is the first concern of the craftsman, the more nearly exact the better, but living at all costs. We are apt to forget that the circle and the straight line are mathematical fictions, forms of speech which have been approached but never realized in a material world. For to apprehend absolute perfection is not given to man, though he be a prince of artists; while ever to strive

after that apprehension is one of his most delightful joys. The pursuit of the unattainable is the piety of art.

To create an atmosphere, to produce an illusion, having been always the artist's prime aim and most elementary need, it follows that in every art there have been evolved its own peculiar laws which facilitate and enforce that object. In poetry, for instance, versification, with all its complex beauty of rhythms and metres, helps to enshroud the theme with atmosphere. I had almost said that versification provides the atmosphere. For although it is so easy to be hopelessly banal in verse, there must still cling even to the worst poetry some of the inalienable charm of numbers. A foreigner at least might hear it with satisfaction.

So that if a man will abandon verse, and betake himself, as he fondly says, to the freedom of prose, he will find the burden of art laid upon him more than twice as heavy as

before. He is cast utterly upon his own resources, and yet the obligations of his art are not diminished one jot. There is the same old tale of illusion and atmosphere to be made up, and not a shred of material in stock. One thinks of prose as the simplest, most natural means of expression, and of poetry as laboured in comparison. I fancy, however, that if we could interrogate those who have been masters of both arts, we should find the reverse to be true. "Prose is toil," they would say, "while poetry is play."

At all events, there is atmosphere in form; and it is the engrossing business of the artist to manipulate his form, to humour it, to coax it, to compel it, to woo it, so as to make it yield the greatest possible amount of atmosphere for his purpose. In all this he must take care to call to his aid every available resource of his craft. In the first place he must enlist the sympathetic help of words by using them kindly and rightly according to their nature

and genius, and as they belong, and not antagonize them by misapplication. I have known writers who established a reputation for great cleverness simply by the misuse of words. Their style was called original. It was. For pure unmitigated cruelty to our tiny, long-suffering servants, these patient words, it was unmatched. Now a man who will mutilate his mother tongue merely to display his own agility is no better than a heathen. It is so needless, too. For to the generous and sedulous master, what revelations of undreamed beauty, what marvels of import, will not words impart?

I would not speak as a pedant, nor as a dilettante, on this topic, but only as a sober bystander in this great gallery of art, this lovely world which we are permitted to wander through. I see how much things are enhanced in my eyes by the atmosphere that surrounds them; I see how naked and poverty-stricken they appear without it; and I say to myself, " I love atmosphere, in art and in life.

I will surround myself with it, whenever I can do so unselfishly. And if I were an artist of any sort, it is atmosphere that I should seek first of all."

THE END.

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